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THE SACRAMENT

St. Matthew. Chap. 26. Ver. 27 - 30.

The LIFE OF CHRIST.



THE ASSUMPTION

SADLIER & C°

NEW YORK.



The LIFE OF CHRIST.



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THE ASSUMPTION.

D. & J. SADLIER & Co.
NEW YORK.



THE

HISTORY

OF THE

LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

FROM HIS INCARNATION UNTIL HIS ASCENSION,

DENOTING AND INCORPORATING

The Words of the Sacred Text from the Vulgate.

ALSO,

THE HISTORY OF

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

CONNECTED, EXPLAINED, AND BLENDED WITH REFLECTIONS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

FATHER FRANCIS DE LIGNY,

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS,

By Mrs. J. Sadlier.

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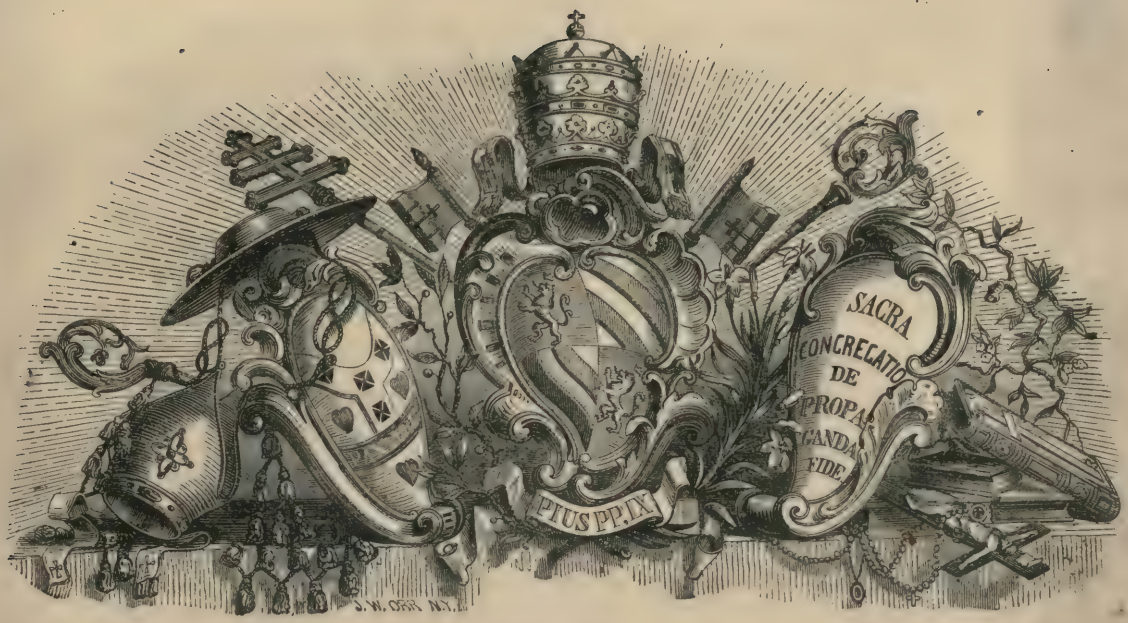
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THE LIFE OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, Translated from the French of FATHER FRANCIS DE LIGNY, S. J., by MRS. J. SADLIER. BEING DULY SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION TO US, WE HEREBY APPROVE OF ITS PUBLICATION.

✠ JOHN,
Archbishop of New-York.

NEW YORK, *September* 18, 1851.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE first part of this work, viz., the "Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ," has been already published on the other side of the Atlantic; but somehow the translation was not approved of by American readers, and I have endeavored to place before them a new version of a work so justly esteemed. In looking over the translation already made by a learned gentleman of Dublin, I very soon perceived that his great error lay in a too close adherence to the original, thereby cramping and constraining, to a certain extent, the English meaning. There is no denying that the translation is, in the main, a faithful one; but it is in many instances *too* faithful to the French to be altogether true to the English, seeing that the genius of the two languages is so very, very different. If I have succeeded, even partially, in making this great work acceptable to the American public, I shall be well repaid for my labor.

With respect to the second part, the "Lives of the Apostles," I am not aware that it has been as yet translated, and I feel happy to offer it to those who cannot enjoy it in the beauty of the original. I am fully conscious that my translation will give but a faint idea of the author's style, but I have the poor consolation of knowing that very few translations ever *do*. I have done it to the best of my ability; and if it be not all that the reader could wish, surely it is better than having a work so rare and so valuable locked up in the recesses of a foreign language. I am only sorry that this most valuable production of the learned and pious De Ligny has not

fallen into better hands; but as the task has devolved on me, I have endeavored to perform it in what I considered the most suitable manner—that is to say, without any of those meretricious ornaments of style which might infringe on the chaste simplicity of the learned author. The Scriptural portions of the work, I have, of course, copied with the most scrupulous care from an approved version of the New Testament, and I trust they will be found correct.

MONTREAL, *August*, 1851.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

MANY pious and enlightened persons have considered that a work like this might not be altogether useless; and hence it is that its author has placed it before the public. He first undertook it with the sole idea that it was a good and suitable work for the leisure hours of a priest; and even in occupying those hours, it was productive of some advantage to himself, so that he could not consider such time ill spent. But if this work may also serve to instruct the faithful, he believes it his duty not to withhold it from them. His idea is not a new one, and he has no desire to claim the merit of invention. There are in existence numberless concordances of the four Gospels, wherein the word of God and the word of man are interwoven, as in this work. Many, almost numberless, are the commentaries and reflections on the Gospels; so that the present writer can lay claim to nothing peculiar, excepting only his style and his selections, together with some observations which he believed necessary, in order to explain certain obscure texts. Even for these he cannot venture to claim originality: he can only say that he has never seen them in any of the authors consulted by him. To these are added some moral reflections, which grew out of the subjects before him, and which appeared to the author as calculated to excite and nourish piety. He has also endeavored to explain some of the evangelical dogmas. The nature of the work required that these explanations should be brief, and it was, moreover, necessary to make them clear and simple: it is for the reader to judge wheth-

er he has succeeded in these points. These explanatory notes are not intended for professed theologians. Far be it from the author's mind to think of giving instruction to those whom he considers as his masters. No; they are solely intended for that numerous class who, in matters concerning religion, have no more than the limited knowledge usually obtained in what is called "a Christian education." They may also be found of some value to those ecclesiastics who have as yet made no very profound study of Scripture or theology, or to those who may have forgotten, in the multitude of their avocations, a portion of what they had in early life acquired. Many of these explanations are directed against heretics, for it is always useful to know how they pervert the Scriptures in support of their errors, and the manner in which the Church confutes them. Protestants in particular are frequently referred to, as being more known to us, and coming in closer contact with us. But there is yet another reason—shall we venture to confess it? There are sometimes found among us Catholics (at least by profession) who advance in conversation the same opinions as they do; and who, though not daring to maintain them as dogmas, at least propose them speculatively. This mode of speaking is seldom found in countries where the leaven of Protestantism has not penetrated, which fact shows plainly the origin of the evil. Whether those who assume this tone believe or do not believe what they say—for it generally happens that there is more of vanity than of conviction in these flippant remarks—yet every Catholic, who is truly attached to the faith of his fathers, will be very glad to have the means either of enlightening or confounding them, as the case may require. The authorities whom the author has followed in explaining the sacred text are, generally speaking, the Fathers of the Church, and the best authorized commentators. He embraces no particular system, and gives no opinion of his own on those questions; he simply fol-

lows the teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church. Whatever is at all opposed to that appears to him suspicious, and he therefore scrupulously avoids it. He cannot hope that his work will be found free from errors, but he implores his readers to place them solely to the account of his limited intelligence, and to rectify them by the same standard which has guided him in his work—the common teachings of the Catholic Church.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND FRENCH EDITION.

THERE are few who have not wished, when reading over the New Testament, to have its contents arranged in one regular history, giving the Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the order of time, and disengaged from the numerous repetitions unavoidable in four different narratives. This was the intention with which Father De Ligny commenced his work, and there is no doubt that he has carried it out with complete success. Taking for his basis the *History of the Life of Jesus Christ*, he has compiled it from the text of the four Evangelists. In this new edition, all the Scriptural part has been marked by inverted commas, and the references are everywhere given, so that the reader may at any time compare this narrative with the Gospel history.

Although this *History of the Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ* forms a complete work in itself, yet we have thought it expedient to follow it up by *a summary of what is contained in the Acts of the Apostles.* In order to render this edition still more complete, we have furnished it with an *Analytical Table of Contents*, arranged with the utmost care and attention. Such a Table we considered necessary, in order to point out the various and important subjects treated of in the notes.

There are now very few of the faithful who cannot provide themselves with a work so useful, so precious. Its merit is universally recognized, and its reputation is daily increasing. It is, beyond all doubt, the best concordance which we have of the four Gospels, as

well as the most faithful and exact translation of them which we have in our language (*Father De Ligny speaks, of course, of the French language*).

"Father De Ligny's paraphrase has no interference with the divine original, and it is so written as to exclude all modern idioms or peculiarities of style which might detract from the dignity and severe simplicity of the ancient phraseology, of which the Scriptures are the most perfect model. Leaving the text in all its integrity, he has contrived to introduce short reflections, so skilfully constructed, that, without at all infringing on the sacred text, they serve, as it were, to fill up the interstices, and to preserve the thread of the history, correcting and arranging its various incidents, so as to make one complete whole. Explanations of the Word of God may be given by men, without at all compromising the dignity of the text. Finally, the work is enriched by critical notes, equally useful to the true believer, and to the skeptic or infidel: to the former for confirming him in his faith, and to the latter for dissipating his doubts and convincing him of his error.

"Another recommendation for this work is the very name of its author. Father De Ligny was a member of that illustrious society whose fall has been a grievous disaster to France, and whose memory is still so fondly cherished.* He first appeared with success in the pulpits of the French capital, and had even been appointed to preach at court, when the genius of destruction, which had been so long laboring to undermine all the religious orders, commenced with destroying the most useful as well as the most distinguished. Father

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* Happily, the fall of the Jesuits was but temporary, and their society has risen again, phœnix-like, from its own ashes, to shed renewed light on the darkening countries of Europe.—(TRANSLATOR.)

De Ligny then retired to Avignon, where he continued to exercise his rare talents for preaching. His elocution had in it something very original, not without a certain degree of quaintness; but it was so analogous to his character, that it excited more interest than the most studied oratory could ever produce, and gave added charms to his discourse. Nor were his virtues at all inferior to his talents. He was distinguished by that modesty of demeanor and suavity of manner which are usually characteristic of the members of his order, and which serve to smooth down the prejudices of worldlings, while they secure the respect due to religion. He preached through all the southern provinces of France, and everywhere addressed crowded audiences, till the very close of his life. He died at Avignon in 1788, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, happy in being taken hence on the very eve of the dread catastrophe, and in having heard but the distant growling of that storm which soon after burst over the fair fields of France. He died with only a presentiment of the evil to come."—(M. De Boulogne.)

It may be well to mention here that the learned and pious author of this work was born at Amiens, on the 4th of May, 1709, and entered the Society of Jesus while yet very young. He was for some time Professor of Humanities in certain of the colleges belonging to his order; but having shown very decided talents for the pulpit, he in his more advanced years devoted himself to the holy office of preaching the Word.

While stationed at Avignon, Father De Ligny published, under his own superintendence, the first edition of this work, undoubtedly the greatest of all his productions. He had previously published at Paris, in 1759, "The Life of Ferdinand, King of Castile and Leon." In his latter years he composed "The History of the Acts of the Apostles," but it was not published till after his death.

THE HISTORY

OF THE LIFE OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST,

FROM HIS INCARNATION TO HIS ASCENSION.

PART I.

FROM THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD UNTIL THE CURE OF THE MAN BORN BLIND.

CHAPTER I.

PREFACE OF SAINT LUKE.—ETERNAL GENERATION OF THE WORD AND HIS INCARNATION.—TESTIMONY RENDERED TO HIM BY SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST.—THE HOLY PRECURSOR ANNOUNCED AND PROMISED.

(*a*) "THE beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God."

(*b*) "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a narration of the things that have been accomplished among us, according as they have delivered them unto us who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word; it seemed good to me also, having diligently attained to all things from the beginning, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mayest know the verity of those words in which thou hast been instructed."

Thus speaks Saint Luke; and Saint Mark, the other disciple, might have used the same language. Nay, both evangelists could have said what, in point of fact, Saint John has declared: (*c*) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and

(*a*) St. Mark, i. 1. (*b*) St. Luke, i. 1. (*c*) I. St. John, i. 1, 3.

our hands have handled, of the Word of life.....We declare unto you; that you also may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship may be with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ." Viz.: whilst some recount what they actually saw, others relate what they heard from those who had viewed the facts; the first class of evangelists being intelligent witnesses, and the latter attentive hearers, all were faithful historians. The coincidences of their statements are so perfect, that no inconsistency can possibly be detected, and there is just enough of variation in the details to rebut the slightest presumption of collusion or conspiracy. Through all these minute differences we may recognize the organs of the same spirit, just as in the varieties of family features we acknowledge the offspring of the same father. We shall now enter on their narrative, by stating what was before the origin of time, this Eternal Word, whose temporal life is the subject of this History.

(*a*) "In the beginning was (1) the Word (2), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (3); the same was in the beginning with God (4). All things were made by him (5); and without him was made nothing that was made.

(*a*) St. John, i. 1–18.

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(1) The word of the Father; the interior expression of his intelligence; the eternal and infinite production of his infinite knowledge. The term of this knowledge is a divine person distinct from the divine person which produces it. If undoubtedly this is a great mystery, may we not add that it is the only mystery here? For that this person must be consubstantial and coeternal with his principle, is as evident as that the knowledge, reason, and wisdom of the Godhead cannot be of any other substance or of shorter duration than God himself. We must needs say the same of the Holy Ghost, who is the substantial love of the Father and the Son.

(2) When every object which had a beginning began its existence, the Word was already: hence he is without beginning; hence he is eternal.

(3) Skeptics might perhaps cavil at the other expressions in this verse which declare the divinity of the Word, but this proposition narrows them explicitly to the sense of divinity strictly speaking; for is it possible to say more precisely that the Word was God, than by saying *the Word was God?*

(4) This resumption represents, if we may presume to use such a form of expression, the situation of the Word during that eternity which preceded creation. He dwelt shrouded in the bosom of his Father: as yet he had not been produced, or, as we might say, brought forward to view; he was displayed by the creation and incarnation. This may be considered as an abstract of what the Evangelist states and is going to state concerning him.

(5) God made all things by his word, since he created them by his intelligence; hence

"In him was life (6), and the life was the light of men (7). The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (8). There was a man sent from God whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. *The word* was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world."

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name, who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (9). AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH (10).

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we say (and in as strict a sense of the Word as of the Father) that all things were made by him. The Arians concluded from this that the Son was inferior to the Father, since he acted in the subordinate character of his instrument at the creation. Yet the intelligence which actuates was never denominated an instrument; and supposing the denomination were correct, we must admit that such an instrument should be coequal to his employer. For who ever advanced or thought that an intelligent being, no matter what that might be, was greater than his own intelligence, or somewhat less than himself?

(6) He was the author and the meritorious cause of the life of grace to be followed by an eternal life of glory. This meaning explains the passage of Saint John, by Saint John himself, who says, Epistle I. John, v. 11, "God has given to us eternal life, *and this life is in his Son.*" Here, alluding to the Son, he says, "*In him was life.*" Both expressions convey obviously the same meaning.

(7) The Word gave life to men by irradiating their souls, and that light referred to here is the light of faith, and not, as many say, the natural light of reason. This is deducible from many reasons. The following is conclusive: The Evangelist speaks here of that light to which he is just going to state that Saint John the Baptist gave testimony. Now, the direct object of Saint John the Baptist's testimony was not Jesus Christ as author of the light of reason, but Jesus Christ as author of the Christian faith and evangelical law.

(8) Mankind were immersed in the darkness of ignorance and error. They could not discern the light, because they did not wish to discern it. Those who bandage their own eyes cannot see the light of day. Ought they, therefore, to blame the sun?

(9) Here the Evangelist speaks simultaneously of the incarnation of the word, and the spiritual birth of the children of God, as the first is the meritorious cause, and also the evidence of the latter. At least it is a further argument, inasmuch as it is more difficult to believe that the word of God was made flesh, than that flesh and blood could become the adopted child of God.

(10) That is to say, that he was made man. The evangelist names the part for the whole: and that, too, the most despicable part, to impress us more deeply with the prodigious

"He dwelt among us full of grace and truth; and we have seen his glory (11), the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father.

"John beareth witness of him, and crieth out, saying: This was he of whom I spoke, he that shall come after me is preferred before me, because he was before me. Of his fulness we all have received (12), and grace (13) for grace. For the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Let none be surprised at our descanting on matters rising so high above the sphere of human understanding. They may be heard with astonishment, but our testimony is not the less admissible. "No man, *it is true*, hath seen God; *but* the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him *to us*."

The most obvious characteristics should designate that man who was commissioned to point out first to the world the incarnate word. Nothing else could give irresistible weight to his testimony. God provided for this emergency, and we shall now see that at the out-

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humiliation of the Son of God. There is great energy in the juxtaposition of the two terms the *word* was made *flesh*. Hence, some of the earlier heretics took occasion to say that the word merely assumed the flesh, which he animated as its soul. Jesus Christ anticipated them by saying, "*My soul* is troubled; *my soul* is sorrowful unto death; Father, into thy hands I commend *my spirit*." Supposing even that he had not spoken thus, he is styled man more than once in Scripture, which is quite enough to clear up all doubts of his having assumed a rational soul. A human body without a soul would no more be a man than a tree is; and if its soul was irrational, such an object would differ in figure only from the brute. This observation is directed against the heretic Appollonarius, who attributed mere sensation, or a sensitive soul, to Jesus Christ, and not a rational soul. It would be an endless task to review all the impious absurdities and fanciful visions which the heretics ran into with reference to the Incarnation. We evince our faith and good sense by thoroughly acquiescing in all that it has pleased God to reveal to us on the subject.

(11) His glory was made manifest by his miracles. Saint John had the further advantage of having been one of those three who had seen him in his transfiguration.

(12) All graces come from the plenitude of Jesus Christ, as the showers which fertilize the earth are exhaled from the ocean, and the rivers roll back again the mass of waters which they derived from that mighty element.

(13) The law of grace as contradistinguished from the grace of the law; for this really was a grace; but the latter is so superior to the former, that, when spoken of by way of comparison, the first might simply be called *the law*, and the second *the grace;* the more so, as all the grace of the old law sprang from the grace of the new law, which gushed forth by anticipation.





set such an individual attracted the attention of all Judea by the prodigies which preceded and accompanied his birth.

(*a*) "There was in the days of Herod (14), the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zachary of the course of Abia (15), and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name Elizabeth. They were both just before God, walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord, without blame. They had no son, for that Elizabeth was barren, and they both were well advanced in years. It came to pass that while Zachary executed the priestly office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priestly office, it was his lot to offer incense, going into the temple of the Lord (16); and all the multitude of the people was praying without at the hour of incense (17). In the mean while there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. Zachary seeing him, was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him: Fear not, Zachary; for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son,

(*a*) St. Luke, i. 5–25.

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(14) We find three Herods mentioned in the New Testament. This Herod, an Idumean by birth, and surnamed Herod the Great, was the first of his family who reigned in Judea. His jurisdiction extended over the whole country, and it was he who ordered the massacre of the innocents. The second was Antipas, son of the former Herod: he was Tetrarch of Galilee, and, having contracted an incestuous marriage with Herodias, murdered Saint John the Baptist. This was the man who sent Jesus Christ to Pilate, and had him robed in derision with a white garment. A third Herod, surnamed Agrippa, is spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles. He was the son of Aristobulus, who, together with his brother Alexander, was put to death by Herod the Great, their father. Mariamne was their mother. It was he who caused Saint James to be beheaded; who cast Saint Peter into prison; who was at length stricken by an angel, and died, gnawed by worms, because he had not referred the glory to God when a fawning multitude cried out: "His voice is the voice of God, not of man." He was the father of that Agrippa before whom Saint Paul pleaded his own cause.

(15) David had divided all the sacerdotal order into families or societies, each of which was distinguished by the surname of its chief or head. They performed service by turns, and the peculiar functions of each priest were assigned to him by lot.

(16) In the part of the temple where the altar of incense was erected; this was separated by a veil from the more inward recess, called the Holy of Holies, into which the high priest alone was admissible, and that but once a year.

(17) In the vestibule, or lobby, where the people staid praying. Priests alone were allowed to enter that part where the altar of incense was.

and thou shalt call his name John (18). Thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth; For he shall be great before the Lord. He shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb (19). He shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God (20): And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, that he may turn the hearts of the fathers to the children (21), and the incredulous to the wisdom of the just, to prepare for the Lord a perfect people.

"Zachary said to the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.

"The angel answering said to him: I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I am sent to speak to thee, and to bring thee these

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(18) The words *thy prayer is heard* being followed immediately by the prediction, *thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son,* would at first sight lead us to infer that the object of Zachary's prayer was to have a son; yet had he made this his petition, he would scarcely have been incredulous to the voice of an angel promising fulfilment, unless we assume that he made a request which he thought that he never could obtain, which, indeed, would be a very unreasonable request. It is highly probable that he prayed for the coming of the liberator of Israel, sole object of the vows and prayers of the just of the old law. The birth of a son was evidence to Zachary that his prayer was favorably heard; therefore the discourse of the angel bears the following explanation: your prayer to accelerate the coming of the Messiah is heard, and the proof I give you is, that you yourself shall have a son, and that son shall be his precursor.

(19) Saint Augustine says that Saint John had not been sanctified, that is, purified from original sin from his mother's womb, but merely that he had been thenceforth destined to the office of precursor much in the same sense as Saint Paul said of himself, that God had separated him, that is, chosen him for the apostleship, from his mother's womb. The words now before us, *he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb,* would seem to refute this sentiment, the plenitude of the Holy Ghost being incompatible with the state of sin.

(20) Never, perhaps, at any former period were the Jews more scrupulously attached to the adoration of one God the Creator, than at the period of the coming of Christ; so that the Lord their God, to whom Saint John converted many of the children of Israel, can be no other than Jesus Christ. Besides, it is added that he shall go before him (the Lord their God), that is to say, be his precursor. Now, of whom was Saint John precursor, if not of Jesus Christ? Wherefore Jesus Christ is not different from the Lord God, and this is an unanswerable proof of his divinity.

(21) The patriarchs who shall rejoice to behold their posterity imitating their faith and piety. Other interpreters construe the passage thus: *to give to the children the hearts of their fathers,* that is, upright and virtuous hearts, like those of their fathers. Both meanings are good—the first is most generally followed.

good tidings;" and, as a token both to punish and to cure your incredulity, "behold thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be able to speak until the day wherein these things shall come to pass; because thou hast not believed my (22) words which shall be fulfilled in their time.

"The people were waiting for Zachary, and they wondered that he staid so long in the temple. When he came out, he could not speak to them; and they understood that he had seen a vision, *for* he made signs to them, and remained dumb. After the days of his office were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived and hid herself five months (23). Thus," said she, concealing her secret joy within herself, "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me, in the days wherein he hath had regard to take away my reproach among men."

CHAPTER II.

ANNUNCIATION.—VISITATION.—BIRTH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST.—CANTICLE OF ZACHARY.

THE time was fulfilled, and all was prepared for the incarnation of the word, when, "in the sixth month" after the conception of the divine Precursor, (*a*) "the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a

(*a*) St. Luke, i. 26–80.

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(22) Zachary, it seems, was merely in doubt; yet to doubt is not to believe, and the word of the angel is exact. However, call it doubt or incredulity, it was reprehensible, and was justly punished: some say he sinned mortally, but such is not the general opinion; surprise and want of thought give a complexion to his incredulity similar to the fault of Moses, which did not deprive him of grace, though it entailed exclusion from the land of promise.

(23) Elizabeth was unwilling to expose to public derision the first signs of a pregnancy which might at least seem equivocal in a woman so far advanced in years. She felt no uneasiness at being seen when her pregnancy became a fact so incontestible as to challenge surprise and admiration. This is the most likely reason that can be assigned for her conduct under these circumstances.

city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused (1) to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. The angel being come in, said unto her, Hail full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. When she had heard, she was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. Fear not, Mary, the angel said to her; for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb; and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Most High; the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David (2) his father; he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end (3).

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(1) There are several reasons assigned why God wished that the Virgin who was to be the mother of God, should be espoused. The following may be considered as the principal reason: mankind could not recognize the virginity of Mary until they had first recognized Christ to be the Messiah. It would have been monstrous indecency that until then he might pass for illegitimate, and his mother for an indifferent character.

The Latin word *desponsata* of the Vulgate, which the Douay version as well as our author translates by the word *espoused*, *avait pour époux*, may signify *affianced* as well as *espoused*. Our author states that this induced many holy doctors to say that Joseph and Mary were merely affianced, but that the great majority hold that they were really espoused; and for a very good reason. To ward off all suspicion injurious to the mother and son by the veil of a marriage, it was imperative that Joseph and Mary should be publicly recognized as espoused, at least nine months before the birth of Christ.

(2) The throne of which that of David was merely the figure. Yet this may be called the Throne of David, and we may add, as did the angel, that Jesus Christ shall reign in the House of David, which was originally formed from the children of David, who recognized the Redeemer, and ranged themselves under his laws. Those who rejected him no longer constituted the true Israel, being no longer a part of the people of God. They lopped themselves off from the parent stem, the Gentiles took their place, and formed, with the posterity of Jacob, one undivided people, of whom Jacob is the common stem to which all the branches are united, whether they spring from or are engrafted on it. Such is the comparison of Saint Paul, which likens the people of God to an immense trunk that has always subsisted, and during the lapse of centuries has but lost some branches to acquire others.

(3) The kingdom of Christ on earth, which is the visible church, shall not end like all the monarchies which have successively appeared on earth; but it shall last as long as the world. The universal dominion which Jesus Christ exercises over all nature, he of whom it is written that every knee shall bend, in heaven, on earth, and in hell—this empire, I say, shall last as long as God himself. In both these senses the angel saith here, of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Mary said to the angel, How shall this be done (4), because I know not man (5)? The angel answering, said to her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. Therefore (6) also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren; because no word shall be impossible with God. Mary *then* said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. *Then* the angel departed from her," and Mary found she was pregnant of the man God, whom the Holy Ghost formed in her sacred womb directly when she gave her consent to this great mystery.

Having had intelligence from the angel of the event which had occurred to Elizabeth, and docile to the inspiration which taught her the duties she had to perform, "Mary rising up, went into the

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(4) Mary was not in any doubt, but she wished to be enlightened as to the manner in which the words of the angel were to be accomplished. The sequel explains the reason.

(5) This would not be a proper saying had not Mary made a vow, or at least an unchangeable resolution to remain always a virgin. She was too judicious not to perceive that it might be answered to her: That which has not been may be, and then you shall conceive a son. Wherefore when she said, I know not man, we must construe: I know not and I never shall know man. No other meaning can be reasonably assigned to her reply. We thus see the reason why the Fathers availed themselves of it against those heretics who dared to assert that after the birth of Jesus Christ, Mary had known Joseph, and had children by him. What great motive or powerful interest could induce her to change a resolution which she alleged as a hindrance to the choice which God had made of her to be the mother of the Messiah?

(6) It did not *necessarily* follow from the fact of a virgin conceiving by virtue of the Holy Ghost, that the son she should bear must be truly God. Adam was not God, although he was the immediate production of Almighty power. Hence, to understand this *and therefore*, that is, to know the connection between this proposition *the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*, &c., and this other, *the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*, observe that two things were foretold: one, that a virgin should conceive without losing her virginity; the other, that the son she should bring forth was to be truly God. We must presume that Mary, enlightened as she was, had not been ignorant of the prophecies: but supposing she were ignorant, this *and therefore* may still be explained. The discourse of the angel signifies, You are the Virgin of whom it is foretold that she shall conceive without the agency of man; *and therefore*, the child which shall be born of you is he of whom it is foretold that he shall be verily God. Wherefore the Divinity of Christ is not a *necessary* sequel of his birth by a virgin, though it is an infallible sequel, inasmuch as all that God foretold must happen.

hill country with haste, into a city of Juda. She entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb (7), and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she cried out with a loud voice, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me (8)? for behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy (9). Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord. Mary said *then:* My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Saviour, because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, because he that is mighty hath done great things to me (10). Holy is his name, and his mercy is from generation unto generation to them that fear him." Cease to be surprised at such a wonderful sight. He has showed the might in his arm; and in exalting my lowliness to such a prodigious degree, he has merely acted in unison with his usual course of proceeding. His ordinary conduct is to elevate the lowly, to humble the proud and the great. We know that at all times "he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted

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(7) This was the moment of the sanctification of Saint John the Baptist. This sanctification was the first fruit of the Incarnation of the Word. Mary's voice was the instrument, and, as it were, the sensible sign of the invisible operation of grace. It is a motive of confidence in Mary, to find her assisting in the first application that was made of the merits of Jesus Christ, after his incarnation, and in the sanctification of the holiest of the children of women.

(8) Had Saint Joseph made the journey, and further, had he been present at this interview, he would have been instructed in that mystery, by his ignorance of which he was subsequently thrown into such great perplexities. This note regards painters, who, in their pictures of the Visitation, scarcely ever fail to represent Saint Joseph.

(9) Joy seems to include knowledge. Such knowledge, it is generally believed, was imparted to Saint John, with the enlightened sentiment of the incarnate Word's presence and of the miracle of sanctification, which the Holy Ghost, whose plenitude he then received, worked within him.

(10) By this canticle it is visible that Mary dwelt alone upon the power and goodness of God—the lowliness and happiness of herself. Saint Ambrose calls this the ecstasy of her humility.

the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent away empty."

Thus his fidelity and goodness appear with no less lustre than his power. By performing that which now makes the subject of your admiration, "He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

"Mary abode with Elizabeth about three months, and she returned to her own house (11)."

"Now Elizabeth's full time of being delivered was come, and she brought forth a son. Her neighbors and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had shewed his great mercy towards her, and they congratulated with her. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they called him by his father's name (12), Zachary. Not so, said his mother, but he shall be called John. They said to her: There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs (13) to his father how he would have him called. Demanding a writing-table, he wrote, saying: John is his name; and they all wondered. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed; he spoke, blessing God. Fear came upon all their neighbors; and all these things were noised abroad over all the hill country of Judea. All they that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying: What a one think ye shall this child be? for the hand of the Lord was with him." This was the moment which God had chosen to accumulate his choicest blessings on this happy family. He gave to Zachary in addition to his speech, which he recovers by

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(11) Without waiting for Elizabeth's confinement, although many other writers come to a different conclusion, and seem to think that Mary must have been present at the birth of Saint John. But besides that the Evangelist's recital naturally inclines us to believe that her departure was precedent, does it not seem that the absence was much more likely than the presence of the purest of virgins?

(12) The name was not conferred until the eighth day, and after the circumcision, for by circumcision alone the child was incorporated into the society of the people of God. 'Tis apparently for the same reason that, in Christianity, the name is given to the child when baptized.

(13) This statement gives us to understand that Zachary had also been rendered deaf, for had he been simply dumb, it would not have been necessary to speak to him by signs.

miracle, the gift of prophecy. This holy old man was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he poured forth that divine Canticle which comprises the entire plan of the Gospel, and a description of the Church in its sunniest days.

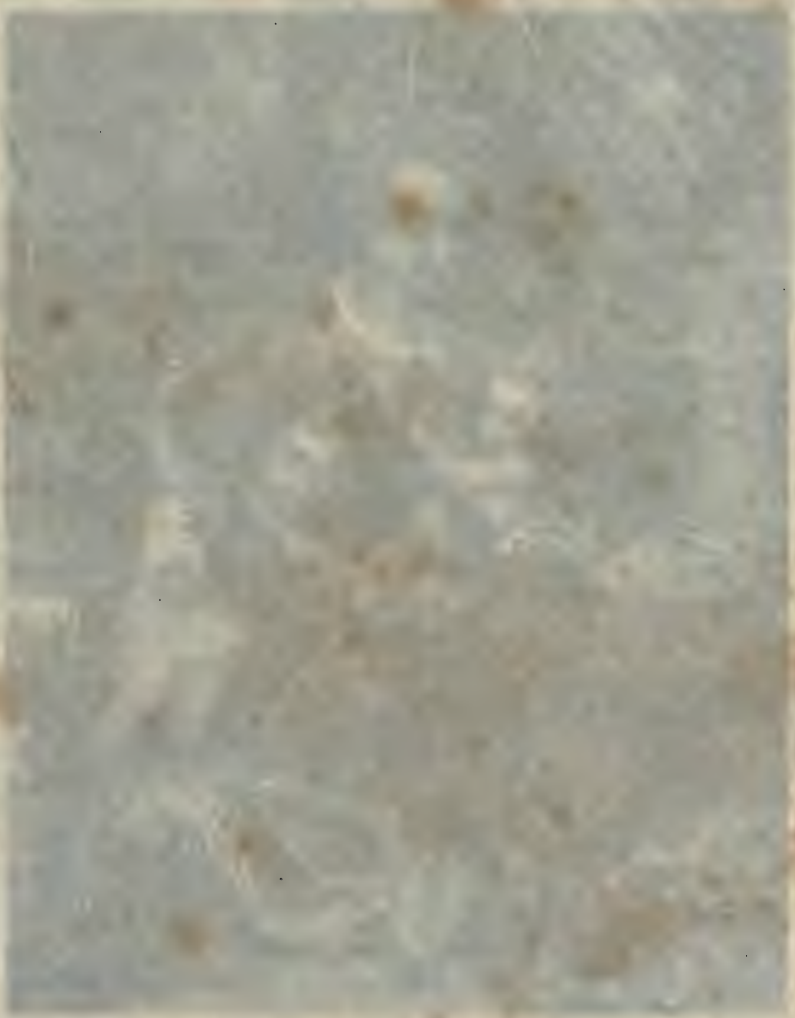
"Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel, because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation to us in the house of David his servant."

"As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets who are from the beginning, salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us."

"To perform mercy to our fathers, and to remember his holy testament, the oath which he swore to Abraham our father, that he would grant to us; that being delivered from the hand of our enemies, we may serve him without fear in holiness and justice before him, all our days."

Zachary, foreseeing the high destinies of his son, turns to him then, and addresses to him these sublime words, which the child of eight days old heard and understood: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people, unto the remission of their sins."

So great a favor cannot be deserved; but it shall come to us "through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us, to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet in the way of peace." Therefore the Messiah as represented here is not what the Jews represented to themselves—a warrior king and a conqueror; he is a Saviour, who, without a single motive but his mercy, and without a single interest but our salvation, brings down to us the remission of our sins. Thenceforth a new order of things succeeds to the ancient dispensation. Fear is replaced by love, and the just man passes his days in holiness and innocence. He enjoys the peace of a pure and tranquil conscience—a peace superior to all others, and which leads him by the only true happiness we can relish in this life to that eternal happiness which the Messiah has merited for us, and which, properly speaking, is the conquest he has made. Such is the picture which Zachary has drawn of the Messiah's reign. The apostles,







Baroccio pinxt. Parker Sc.

The Holy Family.

after the descent of the Holy Ghost, had not a more just idea of the subject, nor one more free from vulgar prejudices.

"Meantime the" miraculous "child grew up and was strengthened in spirit, and was in the deserts, where he remained until the day of his manifestation to Israel (14)," which did not occur until the time when the Messiah was himself on the point of manifesting his presence. For the preaching of the Precursor was to be directly followed by the preaching of the Saviour, as his birth shortly preceded the birth of Christ. (*a*) "Now the birth of Christ was thus."

CHAPTER III.

DOUBT OF SAINT JOSEPH.—BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.—HIS CIRCUMCISION.—HIS GENEALOGY.

(*b*) "When Mary, his Mother, was espoused to Joseph [*we have seen that*], before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Whereupon Joseph (1), her husband, being a just man (2), and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put

(*a*) St. Matthew, i. 18. (*b*) St. Matthew, i. 18–25.

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(14) We do not precisely know at what age he retired into the desert. It was *from his tender years*, according to the general impression which appears to have been adopted by the Church. We must not inquire whether he had sufficient discretion to guide himself, he to whom God had granted the use of this faculty in his mother's womb! The Holy Ghost, who had conducted him into solitude, continued still to be his director and master. There he led an evangelical life; and with good reason was he reckoned by the ancient Solitaries as their leader, and in some sort the founder of the anchorite life. Thus it was that he disposed himself for the sublime ministry to which he was destined, and warned those who were to follow him that the mould for forming apostolic men is the mortification of the solitary life.

(1) Mary had not informed him of any thing. There were two causes for her silence: 1st, her confidence in God, in whose care for her reputation she reposed entire confidence; 2d, her prudence: an occurrence of this nature could not be credited on her report; heaven must speak to make it credible.

(2) Had he denounced her, it seems that he would not have been unjust. But he liked better not to avail himself of the right given to him by appearances. He deemed a mild and moderate demeanor preferable, under these circumstances, to rigorous jus-

her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of (3) the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

This supernatural conception had been foretold. Had Joseph been but slightly versed in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, he ought not have been ignorant of it, and such knowledge served

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tice. Besides, the quality of the just man given to him in the Gospel does not merely signify an equitable man; it expresses the assemblage of all virtues in a most exalted degree. Another cause, which is more than likely, is given for this proceeding. The virtue of his incomparable wife was of so unequivocal a character, that when confronting it, if we may venture so to speak, with what he perceived, he knew not what to believe or what to disbelieve. Wherefore he endeavored to reconcile both things by separating from her, on account of the semblance of crime, and by saving her honor, on account of the persuasion of her virtue, which was so forcible as to counterbalance in his mind such appearances.

(3) Every thing which God performs outside of his essence (ad extra) is common to the three divine persons. Nevertheless, the Incarnation is attributed to the Holy Ghost, because it is a work of love and goodness.

The Holy Ghost ought not, however, to be called the father of Jesus Christ, because, when forming his body, he furnished nothing from his own substance.

In this work there was no fresh creation. The entire matter which served to form the body of Jesus Christ was extracted from the blood of Mary. On this account we may say correctly, that she contributed more than any other mother to the formation of the body of her son.

It does not follow from this that Mary, who certainly was Jesus Christ's mother, should be called the father of Jesus Christ, because that particle of her blood from which the body of Jesus Christ was formed was not a germ, and the same particle took the form of a human body only by the supernatural operation of the Holy Ghost.

God was not the natural father of Adam, although God himself immediately produced Adam, since he did not produce him from his own substance.

Adam was not the father of Eve, although she was produced from his substance, because the side of the first man, which served in the construction of the first woman, was not a human germ: thus it is that Jesus Christ, inasmuch as he is God, has a father and not a mother: and inasmuch as he is man, he has a mother and no father. As God, he was begotten, not made (*genitum non factum*); and as man, he was made, and not begotten, properly so speaking.

We deem it right to add, the body of Jesus Christ was not formed successively and by degrees, nor animated some time after conception, as happens to other children. Perfect organization, yet of suitable diminutiveness, animation, and hypostatic union of body and soul with the person of the Word, were all the work of one and the same instant, and the instant was, as has been said, that of Mary's consent.

apparently to facilitate his belief. "Now all this was done that the word might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the Prophet: Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us. Joseph rising up from sleep, did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took unto him his wife. He knew her not until she brought forth her first-born son, and he called his name Jesus."

It was at Nazareth that Joseph had these perplexities, and the vision of the angel which dissipated them. No doubt he did not then intend to quit that town where he usually resided. But the prophets had already foretold that the Christ should be born at Bethlehem; and God, who does every thing, even when he seems least active, obliged Joseph to remove there with his wife precisely at the time when Mary was to bring forth her son. The occasion of this journey was as follows:

(*a*) "In those days there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that the whole world (4) should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrimus, the governor of Syria; and all went to be enrolled, every one to his own city. Because he was of the house and family of David, Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of Judea, which is called Bethlehem, to be enrolled with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child. When they came, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first-born son (5), wrapped him up in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. There were in the same country shepherds watching and keeping the night-watches

(*a*) St. Luke, ii. 1–21.

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(4) That is to say, all the subjects of the Roman empire. The Romans called themselves masters of the world, although their empire, in its widest extent, had never been one-fourth part of the habitable world. It is true, that the part which they occupied constituted the greatest part that was known in those times.

(5) And at the same time her only son. To enable him to be called *first-born*, it is enough, especially in the language of Scripture, that no other should have preceded him. It is thus that he is called by Saint John, the only begotten son of the Father; and his first-begotten, by Saint Paul (Heb. i. 6).

over their flocks (6). An angel of the Lord stood by them; the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear. *But* the angel said to them: Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people. This day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ, the Lord, in the city of David. This shall be a sign to you: you shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger. Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on the earth peace to men of good will.

"After the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath shewed to us. They came with haste, and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger. Seeing, they understood the word that had been spoken to them concerning this child; and all they that heard wondered; also at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

"After eight days were accomplished that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus (7), the name which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb."

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(6) Yet it was the 25th of December; but the winters in Palestine are much less harsh than ours.

(7) No one is ignorant of this name's signifying Saviour in Hebrew. We shall not descant upon the properties of this adorable name, which maketh every knee bend in heaven, on earth, and in hell. We shall only remark, that by being the proper name of Jesus Christ, it gave ground to the objection that Jesus Christ did not, therefore, call himself Emanuel, as the Prophet Isaias had foretold. All the enemies of religion—Jews, Pagans, and ancient heretics—reproached him with this apparent contradiction; yet nothing is more easily explained. The name Emanuel had been foretold, not inasmuch as it was to be the proper name for Jesus Christ, but as significative of what Christ was to be: and in point of fact, since he is at the same time both God and man, and that he has conversed with men, he truly was *God with us*. Thus the same Isaias said: His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the mighty, Father of the world to come, Prince of peace (ix. 6). This does not mean that any of these names was to be his proper name, but that he should be all that is signified by these names, and that not one of them is unsuitable to him.



The wise mens offering.

We place here the genealogy of the Saviour, such as Saint Matthew and Saint Luke have given it to us. The first, whose principal object was to make known the accomplishment of the prophecies in the person of Jesus Christ, opens by calling him the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, because those two Patriarchs had a special promise that the Messiah should be born of their blood. Then running over the several degrees, (*a*) "Abraham," says he, "begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, Jacob begot Judas and his brethren, and Judas begot Phares and Zara of Thamur, Phares begot Esron, Esron begot Aram, Aram begot Aminadab, Aminadab begot Naasson, Naasson begot Salmon, Salmon begot Booz of Rahab, Booz of Rahab begot Obed of Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, Jesse begot David the King, David the King begot Solomon of her that had been *the wife* of Urias, Solomon begot Roboam, Roboam begot Abias, Abias begot Asa, Asa begot Josaphat, Josaphat begot Joram, Joram begot Ozias (8), Ozias begot Joatham, Joatham begot Achaz, Achaz begot Ezechias, Ezechias begot Manasses, Manasses begot Amon, Amon begot Josias, Josias begot Jechonias and his brethren about the time they were carried away to Babylon, and after they were carried to Babylon Jechonias begot Salathiel, Salathiel begot Zorobabel, Zorobabel begot Abuid, Abuid begot Eliacim, Eliacim begot Azor, Azor begot Sadoc, Sadoc begot Achim, Achim begot Eliud, Eliud begot Eleazor, Eleazor begot Mathan, Mathan begot Jacob, Jacob begot Joseph (9),

(*a*) St. Matthew, i. 1–17.

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(8) Three are omitted—Ochosias, Joas, and Amasias. The mixture of the blood of Achab with that of David was the cause. God had declared to Achab that, in punishment of his crimes and impiety, all his race should be exterminated. He had promised David that his race should always subsist, and would reign during many centuries. Here we see the accomplishment of both promise and threat: David's blood is perpetuated, and continues to reign in Juda; but three kings of Juda, descended from Achab by his daughter Athalie, wife of Joram, are suppressed in the list of Kings, and by this suppression are, as much as it was feasible, included in the proscription of the impious Achab.

(9) As Jesus Christ was son of Mary, and not of Joseph, persons are always tempted to ask—Why the Evangelists have given the genealogy of Joseph, and not that of Mary? This difficulty may be considered as the rock on which all the interpreters that endeavored to explain it away have split: some give explanations by no means reasonable, and the most rational interpreters have stated nothing certain. It is more than probable that information respecting this point was extensively circulated at the time the evangelists wrote. The just must know clearly that Jesus Christ was the son of David. Therefore

the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen, from David until the carrying away to Babylon fourteen, and from the carrying away to Babylon till Christ fourteen."

The genealogy which Saint Luke gives differs from this in many particulars. In the first place, he progresses directly in the reverse of Saint Matthew; and whilst the latter descends from Abraham until Joseph and down to Jesus Christ, Saint Luke ascends from Jesus Christ and Joseph not only until Abraham, but even up to Adam. A second difference is, that he traces the descent of Joseph not through Solomon, but through Nathan, another son of David. The third discrepancy is, that he makes Joseph not the son of Jacob, as Saint Matthew says; but (*a*) the son of Heli (10), "who was of

(*a*) St. Luke, iii. 23–38.

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the intelligence was necessary, and when it ceased to be so, was lost. We must not be surprised, for nothing is useless in Scripture. *I am the Lord thy God, that teach thee profitable things.*—Isaias, 48. Now every thing is not equally useful at all times. It is enough that God confers the understanding of each text at the time of its utility. Thus our predecessors had information on several points which those had not who came after them; and our successors shall be informed on many points unintelligible to those who went before them. Such are the many prophecies of the Apocalypse which regard later times. Faith believes all things; but the reason of the faithful rests satisfied with knowing what God has placed within the reach of our information.

(10) This third difference is the most embarrassing. Still, although Joseph truly was the son of Jacob, he might be called son of Heli, for one or other of the following reasons: 1. By title of adoption. 2. As son of the widow of Heli, married a second time by Jacob, according to the disposition of the law obliging the brother or nearest relative to marry the widow of the brother or parent who had died without children; and the offspring of the second marriage were considered as belonging to the deceased. 3. Joseph might be called son of Heli, because he was his son-in-law; for, supposing this, Heli is not different from Joachim, father of the Blessed Virgin. Out of these three explanations, the first is the least followed; the second is the most ancient and the best authorized. Saint Augustine, who originally adopted the first, and to whom the third was by no means objectionable, finally returned to this view of the subject, as may be seen in the eighth book of the Retrac., ch. vii. The third, which has been relished by a great number of modern writers, has this fortunate circumstance in its favor, that it presents the genealogy of the Blessed Virgin, and by this means the true genealogy of our Saviour, and his descent from David. All this, nevertheless, does not go beyond conjecture, and each individual has a right to rely upon the explanation which seems most probable to him. What we are bound to believe is, that the evangelists do not contradict one another, and in this there exists no difficulty. For, as the sundry suppositions ad-

Mathat, who was of Levi, who was of Melchi, who was of Janne, who was of Joseph, who was of Mathathias, who was of Amos, who was of Nahum, who was of Hesli, who was of Nagge, who was of Mahath, who was of Mathathias, who was of Semei, who was of Joseph, who was of Juda, who was of Joanna, who was of Reza, who was of Zorobabel, who was of Salathiel, who was of Neri (11), who was of Melchi, who was of Addi, who was of Cosan, who was of Helmadan, who was of Her, who was of Jesus, who was of Eliezer, who was of Jorim, who was of Mathat, who was of Levi, who was of Simeon, who was of Judas, who was of Joseph, who was of Jona, who was of Eliakim, who was of Melea, who was of Menna, who was of Mathatha, who was of Nathan, who was of David, who was of Jesse, who was of Obed, who was of Booz, who was of Salmon, who was of Naasson, who was of Aminadab, who was of Aram, who was of Esron, who was of Phares, who was of Judas, who was of Jacob, who was of Isaac, who was of Abraham, who was of Thare, who was of Nachor, who was of Sarug, who was of Ragau, who was of Phaleg, who was of Heber, who was of Sale, who was of Cainan, who was of Arphaxad, who was of Sem, who was of Noe, who was of Lamech, who was of Mathusale, who was of Henoch, who was of Jared, who was of Malaleel, who was of Cainan, who was of Henos, who was of Seth, who was of Adam, who was of God (12)."

These genealogies were mainly for the Jews, who could not recognize a Messiah that might not have been of the blood of David. Whatever difficulties we may meet in them, it is certain that Jesus Christ's descent from David was never questioned, as it never could be, in point of fact. For those who deemed him simply the son of Joseph could not moot an objection; no more than those who be-

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vanced to harmonize them are all possible, it follows, at all events, that no contradiction can be proved, and this is quite assurance enough for our faith.

(11) Saint Matthew says Jechonias was father of Salathiel. Yet the latter might be called son of Neri, either inasmuch as he was his son-in-law, or inasmuch as he was his grandson by this mother, the daughter of Neri, who had married Jechonias, which again suffices to obviate contradiction.

(12) That is to say, who had God for the immediate author of his existence. We may remark, in connection with this, that Saint Luke, who here employs the term of son in a sense different from that of eternal generation, thereby authorizes the different meanings we have given to this term in the preceding notes.

lieve he was born of a virgin can doubt for one moment but that he was all that the Prophets announced he was to have been, all that the Evangelists assure us, all that he has declared of himself.

CHAPTER IV.

ADORATION OF THE MAGI.—PURIFICATION.—FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.—MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.—RETURN TO NAZARETH.—JESUS LOST AND FOUND IN THE TEMPLE.

ANOTHER sign, just as plainly foretold, was to manifest him to the Gentiles; and this sign, whether it appeared at the moment of his birth, or a little before, immediately produced its effect. For, (*a*) "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of King Herod, behold there came wise men (1) from the East (2) to

(*a*) St. Matthew, ii. 1–12.

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(1) We find the term Magi used by the ancient authors to signify, 1. Magicians and enchanters; 2. The inhabitants of a certain district of Arabia which was called Magodie; 3. Wise men and philosophers of Persia, who perhaps were called Magi because there was a good deal of astronomy mixed up with their philosophy, and the simplicity of the ancients identified astronomy with the magic art.

The number of the Magi who came to adore the Saviour is not recorded. The traditionary number of three, which is usually fixed upon, seems to be grounded upon the number of presents which they offered.

Their royalty is not acknowledged by some interpreters. Being commonly credited, the antiquity of the idea entitles it to respect. Yet we must not be understood to mean that they were great and powerful. We know that there are still several countries where the title King is conferred on petty potentates, whose sovereign jurisdiction only extends over two or three boroughs.

(2) According to some, they came from Persia, which is directly east of Palestine. The name of Magi helps to support this view of the case, which probably would have prevailed, if the distance of nearly five hundred leagues from Persia to Judea did not present a difficulty highly embarrassing and unanswerable to any one who adopts the generally received idea that the Magi arrived at Bethlehem on the thirteenth day after the birth of the Saviour. The knowledge of stars which they are supposed to have possessed, induced others to say that they came from Chaldea, a country fertile in astronomers, situate northeast of Judea. Finally, the quality of the presents they carried has given rise to



Jerusalem, saying: Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star (3) in the East, and are come to adore him. King Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. They said to him, In Bethlehem of Juda; for so it is written by the prophet: And thou, Bethlehem, the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them, and sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go (4), and diligently inquire after the child, and when you have found him bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him. Having heard the king, they went their way,"

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the opinion of their having come from Arabia, which is placed southeast of Judea, from which it is not very far distant; and this opinion is generally adopted.

(3) We have nothing but conjecture as to the nature of the star which appeared to them, in what part of the heavens they descried it, and the manner in which their course was thereby directed. Here are the most probable which have been made. This was not a real star, but a meteor more brilliant than stars usually are, inasmuch as its lustre was not eclipsed by the brightness of daylight. They saw the star over Judea; for how could it have made them think of the birth of a new King of the Jews, had they seen it over the country which they inhabited; and could the prophecy which said, *a star shall be born of Jacob*, be applicable to a star which may have suddenly arisen over Arabia? Placed over Judea, this star, by its position alone, furnished them with a guide; nor was it necessary to see it set in motion to ascertain whither they should direct their steps. Once arrived at Jerusalem, they no longer saw the star. If it were, as has been said, in order to test their faith that God made the star disappear, his principal intention was to disclose to the Jews, by means of the Magi, the Messiah's birth, and to the Magi, by means of the Jews, the spot where the Messiah should be born, and the accordance of the prophecies with the miraculous sign which had attracted them.

(4) Herod reasoned thus: should the inquiry be made in my name and by my people, mistrust will make them conceal the child, whereas they will be all eagerness to find out the child for these good-natured East-men, of whom no one has the slightest diffidence. This was subtle reasoning; but the man did not reason when he ordered the murder of the innocents. For this murder was useless if the Messiah were not born; and if the Messiah were born, God, who had promised him to the world, could not allow him to be enveloped in the general massacre. When Herod was subtle, God made a mockery of his subtlety; when he was irrational, God allowed him to commit, without reaping any fruit to himself, a crime which has rendered him the execration of all ages. Ye wise and mighty of the world, how foolish, how weak are ye when you dare to cross the designs of the Deity!

without distrust, and disposed to satisfy him; and "behold the star which they had seen in the East went before them until it came and stood over where the child was. Seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy, and entering into the house (5), they found the child with Mary his mother (6), and falling down, they adored (7) him." *Afterwards* "opening their treasures, they offer ed him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh (8), and having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country."

That prince awaited their return; and since he reckoned upon them, it seems that he made no other inquiries (*a*), "when, after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses (9), were

(*a*) St. Luke, ii. 22–32.

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(5) The majority of the old writers affirm that this was in the stable of Bethlehem; others think Mary had quitted a by-place so inconvenient, and had taken another lodging. The truth is not known; but if we confine ourselves to the text, we will find it difficult to credit that what is called simply *the house* could have been a stable.

(6) Joseph is not named, which gives ground to the presumption of his absence; for when the shepherds came to the manger, and on the other occasions when Joseph was present, the Evangelists make mention of him. Those who are anxious to give a reason for every thing, say that God permitted his absence, lest the Magi might fancy him the father of Jesus Christ. This idea was utterly independent of his presence or absence, and must still have been prevalent in the minds of the Magi, had not God revealed to them that the child whom they adored was the son of a virgin.

(7) Scripture frequently employs this term to signify the homage rendered to kings or personages for whom we have a high respect. In this passage the term is more commonly taken in the sense of adoration properly speaking, because there is very little doubt but the Magi knew by a supernatural light the divinity of Jesus Christ.

(8) These presents were mysterious. By gold, they recognized the royalty of Jesus Christ; by incense, his divinity; and by myrrh, which was used in embalming bodies, his humanity in suffering and mortal flesh. We shall imitate them, said a holy father, by offering to God the gold of charity, the incense of prayer, and the myrrh of mortification.

These were our first fruits, and the vocation of the Gentiles commenced by them. Hence the unusual joy with which we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany.

(9) Here we should notice two distinct laws—one, which obliged those who had borne children to come and be purified at the temple after a certain number of days; the other, which prescribed the offering of every first-born male to the Lord. It may be asked, whether both these laws regard Jesus Christ and Mary? Jesus Christ, who is God, is above every law. Yet, having voluntarily submitted himself to the observation of the Mosaic law, he could not, as he was the first-born, fail in accomplishing the law referring

accomplished, she carried Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord, that every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice, as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle-doves, or two pigeons. *At this time* there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. This man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was in him: he had *even* received an answer from the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came by the Spirit into the temple; and when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law (10), he took him into his arms, and blessed God, and said: Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace, because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Thus we see literally accomplished in this holy old man that expression of the Psalmist: (*a*) "I will fill him with length of days, and I will show him the salvation." But the favor surpassed the promise: for, not content with allowing him to see, the Lord permitted him to clasp his Saviour in his arms; and besides the consolation of Israel which he expected, he was moreover gladdened by the knowledge of the vocation of the Gentiles, and that salvation was thrown open to all people—a truth which was pointed out by all the prophets, but which was then scarcely known, and which the Apostles themselves did not entirely understand until some time after the descent of the Holy Ghost.

(*a*) Psalms, xc. 16.

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to this qualification. The law of purification had for its object the expiation of the legal impurity which women contracted in consequence of their child-bearing. Mary, whose divine parturition had been purer than the sunbeam, was not in the case contemplated by the law; still her perfect purity was an unknown mystery, and the time was not yet come to reveal it. Wherefore she could not dispense herself from the common obligation, without causing herself to be regarded as a prevaricator, that is to say, without giving scandal. Thenceforth did it not become an obligation on charitable grounds?

(10) That is to say, offer him to the Lord, and redeem him afterwards, by giving five shekels of silver, as is marked out in the 18th chapter of the book of Numbers; for the offering of the lamb or of the turtles was only for the purification of the mother.

"His father and mother were wondering at those things which were spoken concerning him. Simeon blessed them" *both*. But enlightened as he was on the difference he should make between her who was really the mother, and him who, merely in public opinion, was the father, he said, *speaking only* to Mary, his mother: (*a*) "Behold, this child is set for the ruin and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted (11). And thy own soul," he adds to her, "a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed."

He also prophesied the passion of the Saviour. God wished that this awful futurity should be ever present to the mind of Mary during the entire course of her Son's life. The object was to prepare her for the catastrophe, and also to temper the joy of possessing such a treasure. Had this joy been utterly unalloyed, she would not have acquired sufficient merit; her consent to the sacrifice of her son would only have been, like that of Abraham, the merit of one day, had she not, by anticipating the intelligence, been furnished with an occasion to make that sacrifice every day of her life, nay, perhaps at every moment of the days and years which preceded the event.

(*b*) "The Lord saith: In the last days I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." This prediction, which was entirely accomplished after the descent of the Holy Ghost, began from this day to be verified. God included both sexes in the glorious testimony which he designed should be rendered to his son. With the holy old man Simeon he associated (*c*) "a prophetess called Anna. She was the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser. She was far advanced in years, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow until fourscore and four years, who departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers serving night and day. Coming in at the same hour, she gave praise to the Lord, and spoke

(*a*) St. Luke, ii. 33–35. (*b*) Acts, ii. 17. (*c*) St. Luke, ii. 36–39.

(11) Jesus Christ always had true and false disciples. In the calm of peace it is hardly possible to distinguish between them, but the flail of persecution separates in a sensible manner the grain from the chaff.

of him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel (12). Finally, when Joseph and Mary had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth."

Scarcely had they arrived there (13), when (*a*) "an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph (14), saying: Arise, take the child and his mother, fly into Egypt, and be there until I shall tell thee: for it will come to pass that Herod will seek the child to destroy him. Joseph arose, and took the child and his mother by night (15), and retired into Egypt, and (16) he was there until the death of

(*a*) St. Matthew, ii. 13–23.

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(12) In a city so large and so populous as Jerusalem, at a period when those who were in charge of police regulations were neither as intelligent as at present in every matter which concerned government, nor apparently as exact in the reports which they made, it was possible, nay, very probable, that Herod knew nothing whatever of what had occurred at the temple, or that he did not receive the information until the holy family had already departed for Nazareth, whilst he thought them returned to Bethlehem. What fortifies this conjecture is the certainty that Herod only ascertained from the Magi the birth of the Saviour, although bruited about with such notoriety at Bethlehem and all the surrounding country. This remark helps to make us comprehend how it is that the purification is found placed between the adoration of the Magi and the flight into Egypt, and goes to support the common opinion, which must not be departed from except when we are coerced by evident reasons.

(13) According to this arrangement, we should admit that the angel appeared to Joseph at Nazareth, and there gave him the order to fly into Egypt. Still the recital of Saint Matthew leads us naturally to believe that this apparition took place at Bethlehem. This raises a very considerable difficulty, but not greater than those which are met in the different systems imagined by the interpreters. We have hazarded one, which shall appear in the note on the return of Saint Joseph from Egypt to Nazareth.

(14) The revelation was made to Joseph. Joseph orders and directs the journey. This was so because God had established him head of the family: authority is attached to station, not to science and sanctity, which were far superior in Jesus and in Mary.

(15) The conduct pursued by Saint Joseph in this circumstance has ever been regarded the model of a perfect *obedience*. His was simple, and without reasoning. He did not allege that, in order to secure his son from the fury of Herod, God had an infinity of means less painful to the child, to the mother, and to himself. His obedience was prompt, and without reluctance: having had notice at night, he did not delay his departure until the light of morning began to break. Generous and full of confidence in Providence, he starts without preparation or provisions.

He was poor in earthly goods, yet, possessing Jesus and Mary, how rich!

(16) We do not exactly know what time Jesus Christ passed in Egypt. Following the most authorized calculations, he cannot possibly have dwelt there less than four

Herod; that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Out of Egypt (17) have I called my son. Herod, perceiving that he was deluded by the wise men, was exceeding angry; and sending, killed all the men-children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation, and great mourning: Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. When Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph in Egypt, saying: Arise, and take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead that sought the life of the child. He arose, took the child, and came into the land of Israel. But, hearing that Archelaus reigned in Judea, in the room of Herod his father, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned in sleep, retired into the quarters of Galilee, and dwelt in a city called Nazareth (18):

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years nor more than seven. We must regard as apocryphal the statements of miracles wrought there by him. One alone is founded on a tradition rendered respectable by its antiquity. Yet there is no clear evidence of this tradition resting upon any historical monument; and it may, indeed, have no other foundation than this prophecy of Isaiah, which several interpreters have thought applicable to other times and other events: *The Lord shall mount upon a slight cloud, and he shall enter into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be shaken before his face.*

(17) These words are read in Osee, chap. ii., v. 1. The prophet spoke of the departure from Egypt, when God broke the fetters of his people, whom he here calls his son, to mark how much dearer to him this was than all other people. The name of son is so inapplicable to this people, and so very applicable to Jesus Christ, that we plainly see that this text can be applied to Jesus Christ alone, in its natural and literal meaning.

The entire ancient Testament is figurative of the new. What was greater in the first than the captivity of the people of God in Egypt, and their miraculous delivery? What more apparently inconsiderable in the life of Jesus Christ than the particular spot whither he retires to screen himself from the pursuit of Herod? Still the first was merely a figure of the second. On the other side, what more interesting in the life of Jesus Christ than his passion, and every thing connected with the same? and in the eating of the Pascal lamb, what less considerable than the prohibition of breaking the bones? Yet this observance, so trifling if considered by itself alone, was prophetic and figurative of one of the principal circumstances of our Saviour's passion.

(18) Should not Joseph, of his own accord, and without admonition from the angel, have returned back to Nazareth, supposing he had left this city to go into Egypt? He had there his house, his furniture, with all the implements of his trade, which he might

that it might be fulfilled which was said by the prophets: He shall be called a Nazarite."

(*a*) "Meantime the child full of wisdom grew and waxed strong, and the grace of God was in him. His parents went every year to Jerusalem at the solemn day of the pasch. And when he was twelve years old, they going up unto Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast, having fulfilled the days, when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and his parents knew it not. Thinking that he was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintances; not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem seeking him. After three days they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and his answers. Seeing him they wondered, and his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

(*a*) St. Luke, ii. 40–52.

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expect to find there. Or if Joseph were to have established himself elsewhere than at Nazareth, where else could that be than at Bethlehem, whence he originated, and where he might presume that God, who made his son be there born, should wish him to be there educated; the more so, inasmuch as the birth of the Messiah at Bethlehem, which would be better known if he continued to dwell there, was one of the marks that should serve to make him known. This observation led us to fancy an arrangement differing from what has just been seen. After the purification, which must be placed before the Epiphany, Joseph returns with Mary and the infant to Nazareth, as stated by Saint Luke; but he only returns there to settle his affairs, and to have his effects brought to Bethlehem, where he was going to establish himself and his family. The Magi arrive, and find at Bethlehem the infant and his mother; not a few days, but several months after his birth, as many interpreters have thought. For it struck them, that the order given by Herod, to kill all male children in Bethlehem and the environs, *from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men*, could not be otherwise explained. Thus every thing is arranged, and all harmonized. The purification took place after the forty days prescribed by the law of Moses; the holy family return immediately to Nazareth, conformably to Saint Luke's recital, and at Bethlehem, as Saint Matthew states, directly after the departure of the Magi, Joseph receives orders to fly into Egypt. For this view, the supposition of the establishment of the holy family at Bethlehem is quite enough—a supposition the more likely, inasmuch as Joseph, on his return from Egypt, would naturally, and of his own accord, return to the spot where he was established before his departure. Yet as all this is only conjecture, I did not think it a sufficient reason to change the common arrangement.

How is it that you sought me? said he to them; did you not know that I must be about my Father's business (19)? And they understood not the word that he spoke unto them. He *then* went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them (20). *As to his mother*, *she* kept all these words in her heart (21). And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace with God and man (22)."

CHAPTER V.

MANIFESTATION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AND HIS PREACHING.—BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST.—FASTING AND TEMPTATION OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE DESERT.—TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.—ANDREW AND PETER CALLED FOR THE FIRST TIME.—VOCATION OF PHILIP AND NATHANIEL.

Jesus thus dwelt concealed until nearly his thirtieth year. His precursor being six months older than he, might have completed that term. We have seen that John, from his infancy, inhabited the desert, whither divine inspiration had conducted him. Destined for a ministry the most sublime to which mortal man had yet been called, God disposed him for it by retirement and austerity of

(19) The will of the Heavenly Father should be preferred to all human considerations and to all the ties of blood. The apparent rigor which Jesus Christ here displays might be designed to impress us with this great lesson. If to Mary a subject of mortification, she was well indemnified for this moment by thirty years of the most tender and submissive respect.

(20) These words comprise the history of thirty years of the most precious of all lives. Rejoice, ye humble who cherish obscurity, and exult in your lowliness.

(21) Mary did not at first conceive his meaning, but she treasured up the saying in her memory. It is written that she kept all these words in her heart: undoubtedly she succeeded in getting at their meaning. She was led to understand them by meditation; by what other means can we venture to hope for proper understanding?

(22) *All the treasures* of grace, as well *as those of wisdom and science*, were shut up in Jesus Christ, so as to be concealed. As he advanced in years he disclosed them in a way proportioned to the age he attained. The indications of them he gave at twenty years of age were, therefore, as different from those he evinced at twelve years of age, as the difference which exists between both these ages. The saying here, *he advanced in wisdom and age*, conveys both these meanings.

life. (*a*) "He had his garment of camel's hair, a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locusts (1) and wild honey." Thus he awaited, and no doubt he hastened by his aspirations the day of his manifestation, which was to be, as it were, the dawn of the great luminary that was about to enlighten the world. This moment so longed after arrived, and whilst heaven and earth were in expectation of the wonders which God was going to bring about, at last (*b*) "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina, under the high priests Annas and Caiphas (2), the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert, (*c*) as it is written in Isaias the prophet: I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee. John *commenced, therefore*, in the desert of Judea, and (*d*) he came into all the country about the Jordan baptizing (3) and preaching the baptism (*e*) of penance for the remission of sins, saying: Do penance; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (4). For this is he that was spoken of by Isaias the prophet, saying: A voice *shall be heard* of one crying in the wilderness: (*f*) Pre-

(*a*) St. Matthew, iii. 4.
(*b*) St. Luke, iii. 1, 2.
(*c*) St. Mark, i. 2–4.
(*d*) St. Luke, iii. 3.
(*e*) St. Mark, i. 4; St. Matt. iii. 2, 3.
(*f*) St. Luke, iii. 3, 5, 6.

(1) Pliny and other ancient authors speak of a species of locusts which the lower orders among Eastern nations used for food.

(2) Annas and Caiphas his son-in-law exercised by turns the sovereign pontificate, each during one year, by an agreement seemingly approved of by the Romans, who at that time had the control of every thing in Judea. This explanation is confirmed by the expression of Saint John when speaking of Caiphas, *who was the high priest of that year*, ch. xviii. ver. 13.

(3) The baptism of John was a religious ceremony by which a profession of penance was embraced. It did not confer the remission of sins; but disposed towards the remission by penance which should ensue, and which became the next disposition to the baptism of Jesus Christ, in which alone is to be found the remission of sins. John's baptism preceded penance; the baptism of Jesus Christ followed penance. *Do penance, and be baptized every one of you*—Peter, Acts ii. 38. The first, properly speaking, belonged neither to the ancient law nor the new law; a medium between both; this baptism participated of both one and the other, as twilight participates of both day and night.

(4) Heaven, closed until this hour, is now to be thrown open. Saint John begins by disabusing the Jews of the prejudice about a temporal kingdom.

pare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths (5). Every valley shall be filled, every mountain and hill shall be brought low, the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

When this first preaching was noised about, the people thronged in crowds; (*a*) "then went out (*b*) to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country about Jordan, and were baptized by him in the (*c*) Jordan, confessing their sins. He said to the multitudes, and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism *with the people:* Ye brood of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruit worthy of penance, and think not to say within yourselves: We have Abraham for our father; for, I tell you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham (6). The axe is now laid to the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, that doth not yield good fruit, shall be cut down and cast into the fire. (*d*) And the people asked him: What then shall we do? He, answering, said to them: Let he that hath two coats give to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do in like manner (7). Publicans also came to be baptized, and said to him: Master, what shall we do? Do nothing more than that which is appointed you, said he to them (8). Soldiers also asked him: And what shall we do? He said to them: Do violence to no man, neither calumniate any man, and be content with your pay."

Yet as the people were of opinion, "and all were thinking in

(*a*) St. Matthew, iii. 5, 6.
(*b*) St. Luke, iii. 7.
(*c*) St. Matthew, iii. 7–10.
(*d*) St. Luke, iii. 10–16.

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(5) A metaphorical expression, taken from the custom of levelling and even decorating the roads over which kings were to pass.

(6) The true children of Abraham are the imitators and inheritors of his faith, and these God could produce from other sources. The vocation of the Gentiles is insinuated by these words.

(7) Each profession has its particular duties; almsgiving is a universal precept obligatory on all who can fulfil it.

(8) He does not mean to say this is enough for salvation; but he spoke with reference to the profession of those who asked advice. Moreover, Saint John might think they would easily abstain from other sins, if they abstained from the one to which they were most subject.

their hearts of John, that perhaps he might be the Christ, John (*a*) said to all: I indeed baptize you in water unto penance (9), but he that shall come after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear." No, said he, impressed with the greatness of him whose arrival he announced—no, (*b*) "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose; he shall (*c*) baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire (10). Whose fan is in his hand; he will purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he (*d*) will burn with unquenchable fire. And exhorting, he preached many other things to the people."

(*e*) "He that knew no sin, for us he hath made sin:" having taken upon himself the entire debt, Jesus was willing to mingle in the sinful throng, and enter along with them into the career of penance. (*f*) "He came in those days from Nazareth of Galilee unto John, to be baptized by him in the Jordan. But John stayed him, saying, I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me! Jesus answered to him: Suffer it to be so (*g*) now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. Then he suffered him (11), and Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan. And forthwith coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit as a dove descending, and remaining on him, and there came a voice from heaven *which said:* Thou art my beloved Son (12), in thee I am well pleased." We have already said that (*h*) "Jesus was" then "be-

(*a*) St. Matthew, iii. 11.
(*b*) St. Mark, i. 7.
(*c*) St. Matthew, iii. 11, 12.
(*d*) St. Luke, iii. 17.
(*e*) II. Corinthians, v. 21.
(*f*) St. Mark, i. 9; St. Matthew, iii. 13.
(*g*) St. Mark, i. 9, 10, 11; St. Luke, iii. 21, 22; St. Matthew, iii. 16.
(*h*) St. Luke, iii. 23.

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(9) An inordinate attachment to a preacher or to a spiritual director has been more than once an occasion of error and of heresy.

(10) This is the fire which descended upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, the same by which the Holy Ghost continues to purify the hearts of the truly faithful.

(11) True humility at first resists God himself, when he wishes elevation to honorable ministers; yet should God persist in wishing, humility obeys, because, if not obedient, it would no longer be true humility.

(12) 'Tis thus the expression is reported by Saint Mark and Saint Luke. Saint Matthew makes the voice say, *this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* The latter likely rendered the sense, and the other two the very words.

ginning about the age of thirty years, being (as it was supposed) the son of Joseph."

The baptism which Jesus just received was not a ceremony of no consequence to him; it was, as has been said, a profession of penance. He wished to exercise its rigors upon himself, and show beforehand to his Church the penance which she should prescribe for her children in all future ages. (*a*) "He returned from the Jordan, full of the Holy Ghost, and was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil (13). He was there for the space of forty days and forty nights, during which he ate nothing. He was tempted by Satan (14); he lived with beasts. When those days were ended, he was hungry. *Then* the tempter coming, said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Jesus answered him: It is written (*Deut.* viii. 3): That man liveth not by bread alone (15), but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." He avails himself of Scripture to repel the enemy, and the text which he employs expresses the confidence in Providence which we ought to entertain in all the emergencies of life. Satan, on his side, endeavored to turn these same weapons against the Son of God; and after having attacked him at what he thought to be his weak point, that is to say, the hunger which he was then enduring, he attacked him in his stronghold, that is to say, by confidence in God, and by Scripture. (*b*) "He

(*a*) St. Luke, iv. 1, 2; St. Matthew, iv. 1, 3, 4; St. Mark, i. 13.

(*b*) St. Matthew, iv. 5; St. Luke, iv. 10.

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(13) He who was the author of all strength might advance to meet the enemy: those who are weakness itself cannot do better than shun the encounter. Jesus is here merely the model of resistance, when we cannot avoid the combat.

(14) The expression is taken from Saint Mark, and is usually understood to mean temptations which Jesus Christ endured after his fast. Some understand this to mean a series of temptations which lasted during forty days, three of which are reported and constituted the last and most vigorous assault.

(15) God does not require bread in order to support man; he can do so with any thing, since by manna, which was only a species of condensed dew, he nourished an entire people during forty years. For it was written, with reference to manna, Deuteronomy, viii. 3: "He afflicted thee with want, and gave thee manna for thy food, which neither thou nor thy fathers knew: to shew that not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

took him up into the holy city; set him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written (*Psalm* xc.): He hath given his angels charge over thee, that they keep thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. It is written again, said Jesus to him (*Deut.* vi.): Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

After this reply Satan thought there was nothing now left for him but one last effort; he set in motion the most violent of all temptations, or rather all temptations concentrated into one. (*a*) "He took Jesus up into a very high mountain, and shewed to him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them (16), and said to him: To thee will I give all these things, all this power, and glory; for they are delivered to me, and to whom I will I give them (17); if thou, therefore, wilt adore me, all shall be thine. Jesus answered to him: Begone, Satan (18), for it is written thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil, when all the temptation was ended, departed from him for a time (19), and behold an angel came and ministered to him (20)."

It seems that when quitting the desert Jesus passed the Jordan, and that John had also crossed over to the other side of the river.

(*a*) St. Matthew, iv. 8–11; St. Luke, iv. 5–8, 13.

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(16) This expression has induced the opinion that Satan, clever in the art of trickery, started up before him, as it were in a miniature, all the kingdoms of the world, with every thing connected with them most capable of dazzling the eyes and tempting to covetousness.

(17) This feature alone was enough to unmask the father of lies. Perfidious, he promises every thing, yet disposes of nothing. Still, if in point of fact he did dispose of all the kingdoms of the world, give them he would for a single soul: he knows their value better than we do.

(18) This is the proper tone for an answer to the proposal of crime.

(19) Whether it be that he in person attacked Jesus Christ again, or whether this be said of the persecutions which Jesus Christ had to suffer from those who, as we have said, were in this point ministers of Satan. For Satan and his agents are never at rest; and this is, perhaps, the surest mark by which we may recognize them.

(20) This repast is the image of the feast which God serves up to the soul which has vanquished the enemy. The moment which follows the victory over a great temptation is the most delicious of all moments.

Perhaps John was forced to do so by the persecutions which he endured from the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he had not spared in his preaching. For the manner in which Jesus Christ speaks of him on more than one occasion leaves no room to doubt that the holy precursor encountered much persecution, which we must not confound with what he subsequently suffered on the part of Herod Still, whether they had changed their sentiments with regard to him—whether they wished to undeceive the people already prepossessed with the idea that John might be the Messiah—or because of the testimony he had rendered to another, they sought to interdict his preaching and baptism, as having no title to authorize him in his functions; or finally, supposing he should declare himself the Messiah, to make the declaration a crime and a cause of condemnation, as they did afterwards to Jesus Christ; whatever was their motive, (*a*) "they sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to him to ask him: Who art thou? He confessed, and did not deny, and he confessed: I am not the Christ. What, then, they asked him, art thou Elias (21)? He said: I am not. Art thou a prophet? No, he answered. They said, therefore, unto him: Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? what sayest thou of thyself? He said: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaias. They that were sent were of the sect of Pharisees. They asked him *another question:* Why, then, dost thou baptize, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them: I baptize with water, but there hath stood one in the midst of you whom you know not. He is the same that shall come after me, who is preferred before me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to

(*a*) St. John, i. 19–51.

(21) John was not Elias in person, but he was such in the sense of having *his spirit and virtue.* He was not a prophet, meaning the foreteller of future events; but he announced and he showed the Messiah actually present, whom he knew by the revelation of the Holy Ghost, and in this sense he was a prophet, and more than a prophet. John says he is not Elias, nor a prophet, in that sense, in which neither is he. Jesus Christ says that John is Elias, and is a prophet, in the sense in which he is both one and the other. By this difference they do not contradict each other; and we are taught by Jesus Christ how to speak of our neighbor, by John how to speak of ourselves.

loose. These things were done in Bethania (22) beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing."

"Next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and he saith: Behold the Lamb of God (23), behold him who taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said: After me there cometh a man who is preferred before me, because he was before me; and I knew him not, but that he may be made manifest in Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John gave testimony, saying: I saw the Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven, and he remained upon him. I knew him not," this he said to remove any idea of collusion; "but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me: He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, he it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost (24). I saw, and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God.

"The next day John and two of his disciples stood, and beholding Jesus walking, he saith: Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus (25): Jesus turning, and seeing them following him, saith to them: What seek you (26)? They said to him, Rabbi (which is interpreted master), where dwellest thou? Come, he saith to them, and see. They

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(22) Different from another Bethania a short distance from Jerusalem, where Lazarus resided with his two sisters, Mary and Martha.

(23) Lamb by his meekness: Lamb of God, because the victim God gives to us, and the only one he will accept for the remission or the expiation of sins.

(24) The Holy Ghost did not visibly descend upon Jesus Christ until after he had received baptism. John, who refused, through humility, to baptize him, therefore knew him previously by revelation; yet he does not speak of this revelation which might be contested, and he merely alleges the descent of the dove, which was the sign that God had given to himself, that thoroughly assured him of the truth thus revealed to him; a truth made so strikingly sensible, having had as many witnesses as there were men actually present, who had come to receive John's baptism.

(25) Jesus was condescending enough to be indebted for his first disciples to his precursor, whose testimony was, as it were, at once the supplement of our Saviour's miracles. This was to honor the ministry of John, for thenceforth Jesus Christ no longer required that ministry, and he made this be well understood, when at the same time he attached Philip to his person by these sole words, *follow me.*

(26) Jesus doth not interrogate to get instruction upon a point unknown to him, but to accommodate himself to our manner of conversing, and to give those whom he interrogates the occasion of saying what was opportune for them to say. This remark is applicable in all cases similar to the present.

came, and saw where he abode (27). It was about the tenth hour that day" (which corresponds with our four o'clock in the afternoon). "Andrew the brother of Simon Peter was one of the two who had heard of John, and followed Jesus. He findeth first his brother Simon, and saith to him: We have found the Messias (which is interpreted the Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looking upon him, said: Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter.

"On the following day Jesus would go forth into Galilee: he findeth Philip, and saith to him: Follow me. Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter: he findeth Nathaniel, and saith: We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write; Jesus the son of Joseph of Nazareth. Nathaniel said to him: Can any thing of good come from Nazareth (28)? Come and see, saith Philip to him. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him: Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. Whence knowest thou me? saith Nathaniel to him." Perhaps he knew me by the report of Philip, was apparently the current of Nathaniel's thoughts; for "Jesus answered him: I saw thee when thou wast under the fig-tree, before that Philip called thee. Rabbi, replied Nathaniel to him, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered him: Because I saw thee under the fig-tree, thou believest. Greater things than these shalt thou see. And he added: Amen, amen, I say to you: you shall see the heaven opened upon the Son of man (29), and the angels of God ascending and descending (30)."

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(27) Jesus Christ had a retreat in the neighborhood, but he had no house which was his own; he could, therefore, say with truth: *The Son of man hath not where to rest his head.*

(28) Not merely on account of the smallness of the place, but also on account of the bad character of its inhabitants, which bordered on brutality, as appears by their treatment of Jesus Christ.

(29) The Son of man properly signified man, or the posterity of Adam. This expression has no other meaning in all the texts of Scripture wherein it is employed, and it would be useless to seek any other meaning for it when uttered by Jesus Christ.

(30) 'Tis hard to find out in Scripture the accomplishment of this magnificent promise, but 'tis enough to know that all is not written.

CHAPTER VI.

MARRIAGE OF CANA.—SOJOURN AT CAPHARNAUM.—SECOND VOCATION OF PETER AND OF ANDREW, FOLLOWED BY THAT OF JAMES AND JOHN.—JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM FOR THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER.—SELLERS DRIVEN FROM THE TEMPLE.

(*a*) "THE third day *after* there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there (1)." Jesus, who had spent these three days coming from the shores of the Jordan, "was invited to the marriage with his disciples. The wine failing, the mother of Jesus saith to him: They have no wine. Jesus saith to her: Woman, what is *that* to me and to thee (2)? my hour is not yet come (3). His mother saith to the waiters: Do ye whatsoever he shall say to you. Now there were set there six water-pots of stone, according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures apiece. Jesus saith to them: Fill the water-pots with water; and they filled them up to the brim. Jesus *added:* Draw out

(*a*) St. John, ii. 1–12.

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(1) Saint Joseph is no longer mentioned. The common opinion is, that he had died before Jesus Christ commenced his evangelical life; and the remark has been very judiciously made, that it was highly proper he should be no longer of this world. For, since Jesus Christ must frequently have to speak of his father as of a person living, the Jews would not have failed to refer to Joseph every thing he should say on the subject, and to substitute him in the place of the eternal Father—a perplexing ambiguity, which would extend to all the discourses of Jesus, and could not fail to confuse all the ideas of the Jews.

(2) Jesus Christ wishes to teach that he should not work miracles, from considerations of flesh and blood; I say he wishes to teach that truth, not to Mary, who was not ignorant of this, but to his disciples, to whom he was one day to communicate the power of working miracles, and perhaps to his brethren, that is to say, his kindred, who, seeing such power in the hands of a man whom they called their relative and their brother, might think he could dispose of it as family property.

(3) The time when he had resolved to work miracles. Still he anticipated the time in consideration of Mary, and the exception confirms the rule. If the answer seems severe, the act is obliging; perhaps, too, this answer was made with an air and a tone which considerably softened down what appears to us rather blunt. Certain it is, that Mary, after having heard this, had no hesitation in believing that her prayer had been heard, since she said directly to the waiters: Do ye whatsoever he shall say to you.

now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast, and they carried it When the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was (but the waiter knew who had drawn the water), he calleth the bridegroom, and saith to him: Every man at first setteth forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now. Jesus did this beginning of miracles in Cana of Galilee. He *thus* manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him (4). After this he and his mother, his brethren, and his disciples went down to Capharnaum; they remained there not many days."

This town was subsequently his usual dwelling-place, and, as it were, the centre of his missions. Capharnaum was a very opulent city, and thickly inhabited. It was situate upon the confines of the tribes of Zabulon and Nephthalim, at the influx of the Jordan into the sea of Galilee or of Tiberias. His coming there, and the great light which thence sprung up (Isaias ix.), fulfilled *that* which was said by Isaias the Prophet: (*a*) "The land of Zabulon and land of Nephthalim, the way of the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles (5). The people that sat in darkness hath seen great light; and to them that sat in the region of the shadow of death, light is sprung up." This light was announced by that truth which must ever be first presented to the eyes of sinful men, the necessity of penance, which Jesus began to preach and to say, like his precursor: (*b*) "The time is accomplished; the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the Gospel." This is the discourse which an Evangelist terms preaching "the Gospel of the Kingdom of God." Meantime Jesus, who was never more to cease preaching it until his death, began to seek his co-operators, and quickly found them. His disciples, who as yet were not inseparably attached to him, had left him, to return to their work. He attached them more closely to his person in the manner we are now going to state, by blending, on ac-

(*a*) St. Matthew, iv. 14–17. (*b*) St. Mark, i. 15.

(4) That is to say, they were confirmed in the faith they had in him; for they must have already believed, since they became his disciples.

(5) So called on account of the vicinity of the Gentiles, perhaps also on account of the amalgamation of these people with the tribes of Aser, of Zabulon, and of Nephthalim.

count of the similarity of facts, two things which some separate and others unite. It cannot well be decided whether in point of fact there were two different vocations, or whether there was but one single vocation, recorded by the sacred authors, with different circumstances, some of which are not recounted by the two other Evangelists.

(*a*) "Jesus passing by the sea of Galilee, saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting nets into the sea (for they were fishermen), and he said to them: Come after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. Going on from thence a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets, and forthwith he called them. (*b*) It came to pass that multitudes to hear the word of God, pressed upon him when he stood by the sea. He saw two ships standing; the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets." In order to join this circumstance with the preceding one, we must suppose these fishermen (whom Jesus had just called), after alighting from their ships, were still washing their nets either from habit or for the service of those who were afterwards to use them. "Jesus going into one of the ships that was Simon's, desired him to draw back a little from the land; and sitting, he taught the multitudes out of the ship (6). When he had ceased to speak, he said to Simon: Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. Master, said Simon to him, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing: but at thy word I will let down the net. When they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes, and their net broke (7), and they beckoned to their partners,

(*a*) St. Mark, i. 16, 17, 19. (*b*) St. Luke, v. 1–11.

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(6) *The Ship of the Church which the Lord ascends is no other than that one of which Peter was established the pilot, when the Lord said to him: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my Church.*—Ambr. *Serm.* ii.

(7) This miraculous fishing is the figure, or rather the prophetic history, of what was to happen to the Church. The prophets had labored almost without any fruit under the Old Law, which was a state of shade and obscurity. At last the great day of grace having appeared, Peter, on the word of Jesus Christ, casts the net of the Gospel. All nations enter there in throngs: both ships, that is to say, the two Churches of the East and West, are filled. This gathering occasions the rupture of the net, whose integrity marks

that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. They came, and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking; which, when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying: Depart from me, O Lord (8), for I am a sinful man. For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken, and so were also James and John the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus saith to Simon: Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men; and having brought their ships to land, leaving all things, they followed him. (*a*) Simon and Andrew left their nets; James and John," not only "their nets they were mending, but their father, Zebedee, (*b*) in the ship with his hired men."

FIRST PASSOVER.

We have said that this first sojourn which Jesus made at Capharnaum was but for a few days. (*c*) "The pasch of the Jews was at hand," and the time was come when Jesus should make known to all Israel its Messiah and its King. "He went up" then with his new disciples "to Jerusalem," whither the festival had gathered together Jews from all nations under the sun. He made himself remarkable there at the outset, by an action which attracted all eyes towards him. "He found in the temple them that sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and the changers of money (9), sitting. When he had made, as it were, a scourge of little cords (10), he drove them all out of

(*a*) St. Matthew, iv. 20, 21. (*b*) St. Mark, i. 20. (*c*) St. John, ii. 13–25.

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the unity of the Church; and whose rupture the schisms and the heresies by which she loses part of her fishing, if we can call a loss a circumstance which delivers her from those cruel children who only were fostered in her bosom to tear her asunder.

(8) The same humility that makes the centurion say: *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof,* made Peter say here: *Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man.* Some have wished to give a different meaning to this saying; but the reason which Peter adds, *because I am a sinful man,* seems to exclude them, and fixes the sense to our construction.

(9) The money-changers gave small change in exchange for large coin, and drew a profit from this sort of traffic.

(10) In order that the weakness of the instrument should make more apparent the power

the temple, the sheep, and also the oxen; the money of the changers he poured out, and the tables he overthrew. To those who sold doves he said: Take these things hence (11), and make not the house of my Father (12) a house of traffic. His disciples remembered that it was written: The zeal of my house hath eaten me up. The Jews said to him: What sign dost thou shew unto us, seeing thou dost these things (13)? Jesus answered: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said: Six-and-forty years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days? But he spoke of the temple of his body. When, therefore, he was risen again from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed (14) the Scripture, and the word that Jesus had said. When he was at Jerusalem at the pasch, upon the festival day, many believed in his name, seeing his signs which he did. But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and he needed not that any should give testimony of man; for he knew what was in man."

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of him who employed it. This miracle seemed to Saint Jerome the most surprising of all those which Jesus Christ performed.

(11) Had he acted towards these as with the others, the pigeons would have flown off, and be lost to the owners. Jesus, who wishes to frighten all, wishes to wrong none of them; and in an action so calculated to excite, he further teaches us that zeal should ever be regulated by prudence and tempered by charity.

(12) An expression till then unheard of. Who, therefore, is this man who calls the house of God the house of my father, and who exhibits himself there with all the authority of a master?

(13) Jesus Christ never worked miracles when either curiosity or malignity was the motive which made them be sought after.

(14) They then comprehended the sense of this expression, which they had not at first understood; they saw its conformity with those passages of Scripture where the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so clearly figured, and they were corroborated in their faith.

What served to establish the faith of the disciples furnished matter to the Jews for calumniating the Saviour. The same results follow from the word of Jesus Christ as from the flesh of Jesus Christ; both one and the other are a bread of life for the good, and a mortal poison for the wicked. *Mors est malis, vita bonis.*

CHAPTER VII.

DISCOURSE WITH NICODEMUS.

This regards those who at first believed in him, but whose inconstancy, known clearly to him before whose eyes all is naked and uncovered, obliged him to take certain precautions with them. Others had even then openly declared against him, and his miracles and doctrine had already produced the double effect always produced by great merit when signalized by great actions, viz.: esteem and veneration in upright hearts; in perverse hearts, envy and hatred. These two passions ever persecuting, and at last accomplishing the death of the Saviour, were inflamed at the sight of his first successes, and thenceforth menaced those who ventured to declare themselves in his favor. This appears by the conduct (*a*) "Of a man then of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;" already faithful, yet timid, anxious for instruction, still dreading persecution, "He came to Jesus by night, and said to him: Rabbi, we know that thou art come a teacher from God, for no man can do these signs which thou dost, unless God be with him."

This introduction expressed the object of his visit; he came to be instructed. Jesus stated to him in a few words the entire plan of Christianity, and commencing by regeneration, which is the groundwork, "Answered him: Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This reply surprised Nicodemus, who, aware of but one way of being born, could imagine no other. "How can a man be born, saith he, when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again?" He asked for an explanation, which Jesus immediately gave him. "Amen, amen, he answered, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water (1) and the Holy Ghost, he cannot en-

(*a*) St. John, iii. 1–13.

(1) This water is that of baptism; for it is not allowable to seek here for another mean-

ter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Wonder not that I said to thee: You must be born again. The spirit breatheth where he will (2); and thou hearest his voice; but thou knowest not whence he cometh, and whither he goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Which is tantamount to the known maxim: Every thing produces its kind. The production of the spirit is, therefore, spiritual, like its principal, wherefore it falls not under the senses. Yet it has effects which hinder us from doubting its reality, like the air or wind, which, though not perceptible to the eyes of the body, is known by sound or other peculiar effects.

The mystery had been explained as clearly as it could be: still "Nicodemus answered: How can these things be done? Art thou, said Jesus to him, a master in Israel, and knowest not these things! Amen, amen, I say to thee, that we speak what we know, and we testify what we have seen, and you receive not our testimony. If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not, how will you believe when I speak to you heavenly things? No man hath ascended into heaven but he that descended from heaven—the Son of man who is in heaven (3)."

These words, all full of depth, signify, 1st, That faith in mysteries

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ing after the decision of the Council of Trent, Sess. 7, Can. 2: *Should any one say that very and natural water is not necessary in baptism, and consequently if he gives a metaphorical sense to those words of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, &c., let him be anathema.*

(2) This expression signifies here properly either the breath or the wind. This does not hinder an appropriate application of the expression to the free and independent operation of the Holy Ghost in our souls.

(3) Yet the humanity of the Saviour had not descended from heaven, but only ascended there on the day of the ascension. This is explained by the personal union of the Word with human nature. By this ineffable union, the Sovereign God who reigns in the highest heavens is truly the Son of man; in this sense he could have said that the Son of man hath ascended into heaven, since he who is in heaven became the Son of man, which he was not previously. He might also have said that he descended from heaven, because this Son of man, who conversed on earth with man, was the same person with the Sovereign God who reigns in the highest heaven. He could have added that he was still in heaven, because his immensity renders him present everywhere, and his persevering union with humanity makes him who is everywhere present be everywhere and always with the character of Son of man, although his humanity be not everywhere present, as the Lutherans say, by an error, the absurdity of which equals at least its impiety.

is not grounded on the evidence of the object, but on the authority of the testimony of Jesus Christ, a proposition which Nicodemus could not gainsay, he having just recognized the divinity of a mission proved manifestly by miracles; 2d, that the explanation just given to him was the most proper to make him comprehend the mystery which Jesus Christ had proposed to him; I say, to make him comprehend it in such a way as it can be comprehended, at least in this life, he clothed it in sensible and corporal images, such as birth, the wind, and its effects. Whence the Saviour concluded that, if he did not place faith in him when speaking such language as he calls earthly, because proportioned to the human intellect ever cleaving to that earth to which it is bound, much less would he believe had expressions been used as sublime as the things themselves that were proposed, viz.: such expressions as no mortal man could understand, and such apparently as human language could not furnish. What Jesus Christ adds, "No man hath ascended unto heaven but he that descended from heaven," relates to two parts of his answer, and signifies that, both as to mysteries and the manner of proposing them, we must refer alone to him who, having descended from that heaven which he always continues to inhabit, and having alone seen them in their origin, is the only person who knows them, and who is in a position to speak of them; which we find similarly expressed in these words of the first chapter of Saint John: (*a*) "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

Nicodemus, thus disposed, was prepared to listen with docility to the other truths in which Jesus Christ was going to instruct him; the Saviour continued in these terms: (*b*) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him (4) may not perish, but may have life ever-

(*a*) St. John, i. 18. (*b*) St. John, iii. 14–21.

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(4) Here faith alone is spoken of: Doth faith, then, suffice, without works? No more than good works can suffice without faith, although in many places of Scripture salvation is attributed to works, without mention being at all made of faith. Join these texts, and in their union you will find the Catholic truth; separate them, or merely consider them in their apparent opposition, and you evidently come in collision with one of these two

lasting. For God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son (5), that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting: for God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him. He that believeth in him is not judged; but he that doth not believe is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment; because the light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil: for every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved; but he that doth truth (6) cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God."

Such is the discourse which the Saviour made to this learned man of the synagogue. It comprises, as I have said, the entire plan of Christianity, and its principal mysteries are here clearly proposed. We see here the three persons of the adorable Trinity, and the part which each of them condescended to take upon himself in the redemption. The Father gives his only Son; the Son consents to be immolated; and the regenerating Spirit, uniting with the water of baptism his all-mighty action, transforms the old man into a new creature, gives brothers to the Son, and adopted children to the Father. The motive of so great a gift is, on the part of the Father, immense, we may say, excessive love, actuating him to deliver up his only Son, the object of all his complacency, for the salvation of an impious and perverse world: in the Son there is a voluntary immolation upon the tree of the cross; and in regenerated man a lively faith replete with confidence in him whose charity was so extreme

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stumbling-blocks: You will think that works suffice without faith, which annihilates all religion; or with some Protestant sects, that faith suffices without works, which opens the road to every crime.

(5) A Jew might think that God had only given his Son for the salvation of Jews. Jesus Christ anticipates this error, by declaring that the Son was given for the salvation of the world, and of *every man*, saith elsewhere the beloved disciple, I. John, 22.

(6) It may be, as some have thought, that the original believers in Jesus Christ were the best class among the Jews, although this was not without exception; or it may be that the expression *he that doth truth*, or *to do truth*, signifies in sinners the knowledge and detestation of sin, according to this thought of Saint Augustine: the confession of crime is the beginning of virtue.

as to suffer for him torment and death. The brazen serpent is given here as a figure of the Old Testament, representing in the most natural manner many wonderful things therein detailed. It resembles the serpent, though without its venom, thus shadowing him forth who, himself without a blemish, assumed the semblance of sin; its elevation in the desert typifies the cross raised on high, and exposed to all eyes. Faith in Him crucified, which may be called the glance of the soul, produces an effect in souls similar to that produced in bodies on corporeally beholding the brazen serpent. Yet, as the brazen serpent, although salutary to many, and injurious to none, hindered not those from perishing who, when mortally wounded by the serpents of fire, refused thus to seek recovery by so easy a remedy, so also those who shall be saved are to be saved by him alone whom the serpent prefigured, and the damned shall be condemned by their own fault. The Saviour goes so far as to declare that the latter are already condemned, inasmuch as, in the sin of their first father and their own personal iniquities, they carry with them the manifest cause of their condemnation; as the Israelites stung by the serpents carried, in the venom which they had received, the impending cause of inevitable death. Those who perish, therefore, perish merely because they choose to do so; and from themselves alone originates the judgment which condemns them. The Messiah's first coming had salvation, not the condemnation, of the world for its object. But this fearful and eternal condemnation only comes upon them for having shunned another transient and salutary condemnation, that which they themselves should have passed upon their own crimes, had they wished to open their eyes to the startling light which disclosed to them their enormity. Still the same fund of corruption which wedded them to their vices made them love the darkness which concealed their enormity, and hate the light which would have revealed it to them; that light which is earnestly sought after and beheld with joy by those who are pure in heart and of virtuous life. An upright mind is always cheered by the light which irradiates it, and virtue must always experience the highest satisfaction from the favorable testimony of such a witness. The grace with which the Saviour accompanied the instruction he imparted to Nicodemus made that proselyte a faithful disciple.

Though he measured cautiously his first advances, yet Nicodemus never betrayed his conscience. True it is, he did not as yet openly declare himself for Jesus Christ, but far from being implicated in the unjust conspiracy of his enemies, he knew well, when the occasion presented itself, how to make them feel the whole extent of their injustice. Cured of his timidity after he had viewed the mysterious serpent elevated upon the mountain, when the apostles were flying in all directions, this prince of the synagogue joined with Joseph of Arimathea in rendering to his divine Master the rites of burial; and lavished upon him the most costly perfumes with a liberality worthy of his opulence and his piety. He persevered till death in the confession of the faith, and in the practice of every Christian virtue; and the Church has placed him in the rank of the saints to be invoked.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS CHRIST PREACHES AND BAPTIZES.—NEW TESTIMONY OF SAINT JOHN.—IMPRISONMENT OF THE HOLY PRECURSOR.—RETURN OF JESUS TO GALILEE THROUGH SAMARIA.

(*a*) "JESUS," after having made this conquest, "came into the land of Judea;" that is to say, he quitted the capital to travel over the country "*with* his disciples. There he abode with them, and baptized (though Jesus himself did not baptize, (*b*) but his disciples)." A very remarkable difference between him and John. The former baptized by himself alone, because, being merely the minister of his baptism, he could not substitute instead of himself any other minister; whereas Jesus, author of his own baptism, could appoint any administrator he wished, and preserve to the rite its entire virtue, no matter by what hand it was administered. Yet the baptism of John was not immediately abolished, after the in-

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(*a*) St. John, iii. 22. (*b*) St. John, iv. 2.

troduction of Christ's baptism. Every thing is gradually shaded in the works of God; and until the precursor's imprisonment, the baptism of water subsisted at the same time with the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, as the Jewish practices subsisted side by side with infant Christianity, until the destruction of Jerusalem. While, therefore, Jesus was conferring baptism by the hands of his disciples, accustoming the world from thenceforth (*a*) "to account them his ministers, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God, (*b*) John also was baptizing in Ennon, near Salim, because there was much water there, and they came, and were baptized; for John was not yet cast into prison. There arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews (1) concerning purification (2)," which here must be understood to mean baptism. The Jews who had declared themselves in favor of Jesus Christ, maintained that their new Master being much superior to John (Aug. tract. 13 in Joan.), his baptism should be preferred to that of the precursor. Whereupon "John's disciples came to him, and said: Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou gavest testimony, behold, he baptizeth, and all men come to him."

The disciples disputed; but the masters were of the same mind. "John," who never had attributed any merit to himself, and who always returned back to Jesus the glory due to him, "answered and said: A man cannot receive any thing unless it be given him from heaven. You yourselves do bear me witness that I said: I am not Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom (3); but the friend of the bridegroom who standeth, and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy, because of the bride-

(*a*) I. Corinthians, iv. 1. (*b*) St. John, iii. 23–36.

(1) Apparently the disciples of John were mostly Galileans, whereas those who had just received the baptism of Jesus Christ were from Judea, properly speaking. For which reason the latter are called Jews in this passage; although, in a more comprehensive sense, the name also belongs to the disciples of John.

(2) Baptism might be called by the name of purification, as purifications elsewhere go under the name of baptism.

(3) The bride is the Church, composed of the multitude of those who believe in Jesus Christ. Its formation was commenced, and the disciples of John brought him the intelligence. Thus, while seeking to excite his jealousy, they ravished him with joy.

groom's voice; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled (4). He must increase, but I must decrease (5)." The difference of origin is the reason which John assigns for this extreme difference between Jesus Christ and himself. "He, said John, that cometh from above is above all. He that is of the earth, of the earth he is, and of the earth he speaketh (6). He that cometh from heaven is above all, and he testifieth what he hath seen and heard (7), and no man receiveth his testimony (8). He that hath received his testimony (9)

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(4) Comparisons only extend to a certain point. John did not actually see Jesus Christ, nor did he hear his voice; but he knew him to be near at hand, and preaching, and he heard the rumor of his first successes. This it is that inspires him with joy comparable to that caused by the voice of the person we love most, which is said to be the sweetest of all music.

(5) In public estimation. For, in reality, there neither was increase in Jesus Christ nor diminution in Saint John.

(6) When he speaks from himself. For, by inspiration, he can know and utter heavenly things, and John himself is proof of this. But those heavenly things which the Son uttered had been taught him by no one; he spoke them from his own will. Others consider Saint John to term earthly those things which he said himself, in opposition to the more sublime truths which Christ Jesus came to reveal to the world.

(7) These words, and those which close the discourse, are sufficiently explained in the preceding discourse of our Lord with Nicodemus.

(8) Passion ever exaggerates. Envy made John's disciples state, *all men come to him*, because several did go; and an affectionate zeal for the glory of Jesus Christ made John say, *no man receiveth his testimony*, because all men did not receive it.

(9) To believe his word, who is sent by God, is to believe the word of God; and to believe the word of God is an authentic declaration that God is incapable of a lie, and that he always speaks the truth. Faith is wholly and entirely comprised in these few words.

God has sent his Son; the Son has sent his apostles. These, by his order, have communicated their mission to their successors, who have transmitted it to us, and who will transmit it from age to age, until the end of the world. To believe these, therefore, is to believe the apostles, who have transmitted the mission to them; the Son, who hath sent the apostles; and God, who hath sent the Son. The simple-minded enter without trouble and without diffidence the road that lies open before them: the road which is straight, level, spacious, trodden by the Christian throng, and in which they see their guides marching before them. Those who combine great abilities with superior judgment, seeing the natural inability of the masses to conduct themselves, agree that they could not be conducted by another course; that there must be a course marked out for them, since they are not excluded from salvation; that it was natural that this road, which suffices for all, should be the same for all. The more so, as when they recollected the great wanderings in which men of eminent talents frequently indulge, they deemed this road at least as necessary for those who reason with over-subtlety as for those who

hath set to his seal that God is true: For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for God doth not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loveth the Son, and he hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth in the Son hath life everlasting; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; the wrath of God abideth on him."

The imprisonment of the holy precursor quickly followed this magnificent testimony which he had just rendered to Jesus Christ. The country which he then inhabited, if not actually part of the division allotted to Herod the tetrarch, at least bordered on his dominions. John had occasion to see and to speak to him. (*a*) "Herod was reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evils he had done. He added this also, above all, and shut up John in prison. (*b*) When Jesus had heard that John was delivered up, (*c*) and understood that the Pharisees had heard that he maketh more disciples, and baptizeth more than John, (*d*) he left Judea, and returned, in the power of the Spirit, into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God."

(*a*) St. Luke, iii. 19, 20.
(*b*) St. Matthew, iv. 12.
(*c*) St. John, iv. 1–3.
(*d*) St. Luke, iv. 14; St. Mark, i. 14.

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do not reason enough. Still there exist subtle minds, who cannot sympathize with what is simple: men of a curious turn of mind, which disdains every thing that is ancient, for the sole reason that it is not new; singular characters, who ever try to distinguish themselves from the multitude; presumptuous men, who wish to lead themselves, and show the way to their very guides; wrangling dispositions, who could scarce live if they did not find matter for contradiction. Such characters quit the high-road, band themselves together, seek for crooked by-ways, thrust themselves into them, and there wander—that is to say, become heretics—for the same reasons which produce in the world blunderers, originals, the headstrong, bad reasoners, bad debaters, and bad lawyers.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

(*a*) "He was of necessity to pass through Samaria. He cometh, therefore, to a city of Samaria which is called Sichar (1), near the land which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour (2). There cometh a woman of Samaria (3) to draw water. Jesus saith to her: Give me to drink (for his disciples were gone into the city to buy meats). Then that Samaritan woman saith to him: How dost thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman? for the Jews do not communicate with the Samaritans." To this reply, which perhaps savored more of a jest than of a refusal, "Jesus answered: If thou didst know the gift of God, and who is he that saith to thee: Give

(*a*) St. John, iv. 4–30.

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(1) The same which is called Sichem in Scripture. It was situated near the mountain of Garizim.

(2) About noonday.

(3) These Samaritans were originally a Chaldean colony, sent by Salmanasar to inhabit the country, which remained a desert in consequence of the transportation of the ten tribes into the States of this prince. These Chaldeans carried along with them their idolatrous worship. God sent lions, which committed fearful ravages over the country. To be delivered from this scourge, they brought from Assyria a priest of the race of Aaron, who was to instruct them in the religion of the God of the country; such was the title they first gave him. They acknowledged revelation; but they only received the five books of Moses, and they altered even them in several passages. But what most of all contributed to make them be regarded as schismatics by the Jews, was the temple, which Sanabelleth, one of their governors, caused to be built on the mountain of Garizim. They constantly preferred it to the temple of Jerusalem, the only place on earth where it was then allowable to offer sacrifice to God. This hatred still exists between the Jews and Samaritans, although the latter are reduced to almost nothing, and are sunk in the most profound ignorance.

me to drink, thou perhaps (4) wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water (5)."

So far, if this discourse did not render this woman faithful, it made her at least respectful. "Sir, she saith to him, thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep: from whence, then, hast thou living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob (6), who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered to her: Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but he that shall drink of the water that I will give him shall not thirst for ever, and the water that I will give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting."

She seemed then to place faith in him; but not understanding what was the nature of this wonderful water, "Sir, she saith to him, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw. Go, saith Jesus to her, call thy husband, and come hither. I have no husband, the woman answered," whether she wished to speak sincerely, or that the ardor of her desire made her deny every thing that

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(4) Jesus Christ was not ignorant of what she would do had she this knowledge. This *perhaps* should therefore be understood, according to the interpreters, to refer to the power she would have still retained then to ask, or not to ask. The amazing prerogative of grace, and that which most strikingly displays its power, is this triumph over hearts, leaving them at the same time the actual power of resistance. If it were necessary to deprive hearts of this power of resistance, grace would no longer be almighty, since, being disabled from triumphing over hearts actually vested with this power, there would be a something that grace was unable to do.

(5) This gift of God and this living water are nothing else but the Holy Ghost, who extinguishes in souls the thirst after the pleasures of sense and perishable goods, who deadens the ardors of concupiscence, who waters the aridity of the heart by refreshing sentiments of piety, and who renders the soul fertile in good works: truly living water both in itself and in its effects, inasmuch as the Holy Ghost, being life, gives life to those souls who receive him.

(6) The Samaritans were not descendants of Jacob. Yet there is nothing to hinder us from believing that in their district several families of Israelites resided; whether or not, they remained there during the transmigration, or came and established themselves there with the Chaldeans, the latter associating with them in their form of worship. Such families would, when speaking of Jacob and the patriarchs, call them their fathers. Chaldeans might also descend from him by alliances with Israelitish women; and supposing none of these reasons existed, the mere habit of hearing the Jews repeat *Our Father Jacob*, might have introduced that fashion of speech into the Samaritan tongue.



might retard its accomplishment. "Jesus said to her: Thou hast said well, I have no husband: for thou hast five, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband. This thou hast said truly." If this was not naturally a good woman, she must have become so already during the interview she had with Jesus Christ; for, instead of giving him the lie, as many others would have done, and with greater assurance the more foundation there was for the reproach, "she saith to him," respectfully, but with shame, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet:" an expression which comprises the double confession which she made of Jesus Christ's quality of prophet, and of her own sinful life. This last avowal was so humiliating that she could not dwell upon it, but takes advantage of the other to turn the conversation upon the controversy which divided the two classes of people inhabiting Palestine. "Our fathers (7)," added she, "adored (8) on this mountain, and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore."

This question has given occasion more than once for regarding the Samaritan as an inquisitive woman, forward in entering on discussions beyond her reach. It seems, nevertheless, that having had the happiness to meet a prophet, she acted wisely in asking him to inform her upon a point of religion deemed of capital importance. Do not let us, therefore, blame what Jesus Christ himself has not blamed. Nay, perhaps he himself inspired the question, that he might take occasion therefrom to instruct the woman in that perfect worship which he came to establish upon the ruins of all the ancient systems, not even excepting that which, though true in itself, was merely preparatory. Therefore he thus spoke to her: "Woman, believe me, that the hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father (9). You adore

(7) Our ancestors, if we prefer to say that the Samaritans were under the impression that the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had offered sacrifices on the mountain of Garizim, which left the question at issue still undecided; for the place where sacrifices must be offered was not wherever the patriarchs had sacrificed, but wherever God had chosen, to the exclusion of all other places.

(8) To adore signifies here to sacrifice. Simple adoration was never forbidden in any place.

(9) My father, or he who, by adopting you, is going to become yours, or better still,

that which you know not (10); we adore that which we know: for salvation is of the Jews (11). But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth (12); for the Father also seeketh such to adore him. God is a spirit, and they that adore him must adore him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith to him: I know that the Messias cometh who is called Christ. Therefore when he is come (13) he will tell us all things." In the mean time she was still obliged, by the declaration of him whom she recognized for a prophet, to acknowledge the superiority of the Jewish worship over the Samaritan—a truth which she seems inclined to elude. As to what regards the new worship which the Messiah alone could establish, she very properly said they should wait for the Messiah. "I am he, who am speaking with thee, saith Jesus to her. Immediately his disciples came, and they wondered that (*contrary to his custom*) he talked with the woman. Yet no man said: What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman, therefore, left her water-pot, went her way into the city, and saith to the men there: Come and see a man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done; is not he the Christ?" Such was, in regard of this woman, the conduct of Jesus Christ, and such was its success. Few examples can be found of so prompt a conversion, and of one whose several degrees are so

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both together, that is to say, my father and yours. The two meanings are true—both suit the text; and Scripture, according to the remark of Saint Augustine, frequently comprises more than one sense in a single word.

(10) Whether it be that the Samaritans had blended with the idea of God some gross error, or whether these words signify that they could not tell upon what grounds they worshipped, their worship having, in point of fact, no divine institution.

(11) It was proper that God should more highly instruct that people, from whom salvation, or the Saviour, was to issue.

(12) Truth is going to succeed shadows, spiritual objects those of sense. Both forms of worship are opposed in what forms their leading quality; for the *new* worship is in some things addressed to the senses, while the *old* must have contained much that was spiritual.

(13) Although the Jews were unwilling to acknowledge the fact, every one, even the Samaritans, expected the Messiah, and expected him at no distant period. For to refer the decision of an essential point of religion to a Messiah who was only to come at some distant and indefinite period, would have been as senseless a proceeding as to refer now-a-days a similar decision to the coming of Elias.

distinctly marked. We see her pass successively from respect of the virtuous man who speaks to her, to the desire of obtaining that which he promises her, although as yet she is ignorant of its nature. Next she recognizes him for a prophet, and in this very avowal which she makes admits herself to be a sinner. She wisely profits by the occasion to get instruction; she listens with docility, and, when once enlightened, she burns with the desire of communicating to her fellow-citizens the light which has just sparkled before her eyes. She leaves her pitcher, as the apostles left their nets: she runs to the city, which she immediately fills with the rumor of the wonderful discovery she had just made. Her zeal for the glory of him whom she announces goes to the extent of prompting her to sacrifice her own fame, by adducing, to prove that he was a prophet, her own misdeeds, which he could have known only by a supernatural light. She invites all the inhabitants to come and satisfy themselves as to the truth of the things she recounts; and, with a success which we may compare to that of the first preaching of St. Peter, she succeeded in as short a time in gaining over to him an entire people. Incomprehensible effect of grace, which in a moment makes a sinner a penitent, and a penitent an apostle. But whilst no better illustration can be given of the efficacy of divine grace, where else is to be found a more affecting picture of its soothing operation, or where can we find a better instance of that admirable art which shrouds, as it were, with the veil of chance, the designs of God, and the most maturely reflected projects of his mercy? Jesus returns from Jerusalem to Galilee; he traverses Samaria, which happens to be upon his route; he halts about mid-day, while his disciples were gone in search of provisions to a neighboring city: he is tired, and he sits down near a well. A woman comes there to draw water; he is thirsty, and he asks her for a drink; she refuses, or seems to refuse it, under pretence of the division which exists between the two nations. What have we here that does not appear the effect of pure chance? Yet all this is nothing else but the execution of the decrees of the Almighty. God, from all eternity, had determined to inspire the woman with a wish to come to this spot on the day and at the hour when she actually came there. She came there of her own free will; but there she must have come inevitably. Heaven

and earth must have perished ere she missed the appointment. The discourse which Jesus Christ held with her, and which seemed entirely occasioned by the good or bad things which she said—that discourse was also preconcerted in the councils of the Most High; and that portion of knowledge which was to be communicated to her had been weighed in the eternal scale. Before she was in the world, yea, before the world existed, it was settled that Jesus Christ should originate in her mind the idea of, and the thirst for, a water which should forever quench thirst, and whose inexhaustible source gushed forth unto life everlasting. Also, that in order to give her at the same time both faith and penance, he should disclose to her both what he was, and what she herself was, that he should enlighten her on the errors of Samaritan worship and the imperfection of the Jewish; that thereupon he should elevate her to the knowledge of a universal and eternal worship, which should extend itself over all times and every people, making truth succeed to figures, spirit to the letter, and the homage of the heart to legal ceremonies. Moreover, it was also settled from eternity that she should be informed at the time of which we speak, that this interior and spiritual worship, alone capable of worthily honoring God who is a spirit, was going to be established; nay, that it actually was established, inasmuch as he who was to be its author and its object—this Messiah whose coming she expected—he himself now spoke to her, and she heard his voice. All these great truths, I say, it was settled that Jesus Christ should reveal unto her, and that independently of her own voluntary effusions, although he said nothing to her that did not seem to flow naturally from her own discourse. Nothing is chance in the eye of God. Nothing happens in the universe but what he has foreseen, but what he has wished, and what has its first cause in his decrees ever free, yet eternal and eternally immutable. I except sin, which, like all the rest, he hath foreseen, but which he can only permit, and which he makes subservient to the execution of his designs. I return to what immediately followed the discourse that gave rise to these reflections.

The following is the instruction which Christ gave to his disciples. As they found him exhausted with fatigue and hunger, (*a*) "They

(*a*) St. John, iv. 31–43.

prayed him, saying: Rabbi, eat." Every occurrence presented to Jesus an occasion of instruction and edification: water had been such for the Samaritan; here food was so for those who offered it him. "I have meat to eat, he said to them, which you know not. The disciples said one to another: Hath any man brought him to eat? Jesus saith to them: My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, that I may perfect his work." He then added, to teach them what that work was in which they were incessantly to co-operate with him: "Do not you say there are yet four months, and then the harvest cometh (14)? Behold, I say to you: Lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest." The apostles did not say what Jesus supposes them to say. These words, "there are yet four months, and then the harvest cometh," was a proverbial way of saying that there was no pressing hurry, and that there was still time for rest. The disciples so understood it with reference to the functions of their ministry. Jesus undeceives them by showing them the countries all yellowing into ripeness, figurative of those people who were ready to receive the Gospel, and of the Samaritans in particular, who, at the moment he was speaking, thronged to him in crowds. Yet, as the apostles might have said to him, the harvest doth not come till after seed-time, Jesus Christ informs them that the seed was already sowed by the prophets their predecessors, whose toil, though at first sight unproductive, was now going to yield a harvest that should gladden both sowers and reapers: this is what the Saviour meant to convey by the following words: "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. For in this is the saying true: That it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth (15). I have sent you to reap that in which you did

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(14) They then were between Easter and Pentecost, and it is known that Pentecost is the time when harvest is reaped in Palestine: a proof of what we presently state, that this was a proverb of the country, and not a saying of the apostles.

(15) This proverb only has, in the circumstances in which used by Jesus Christ, half its application. It signifies, in the ordinary application, that one has all the trouble, another all the profit. Jesus Christ wishes merely to convey that the reaper is different from the sower, although one and the other were equally to share the crop.

not labor: others have labored, and you have entered into their labors (16)."

"Now many of the Samaritans of that city believed in him for the word of the woman giving testimony (17): He told me all things whatsoever I have done. So when the Samaritans were come to him, they desired that he would tarry there, and he abode there two days; and many more believed in him, because of his own word. They said to the woman (18): We now believe not for thy saying, for we ourselves have heard him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world (19)."

After the two days which Jesus had granted to the earnest solicitations of the Samaritans, "he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself gave testimony that a prophet (20) hath

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(16) Have not, then, the apostles toiled as much as the prophets? Yes, but when toiling they had the consolation of reaping the fruit of their labors. Theirs was the toil of the harvest-time, wherein pain is mingled with joy, and the joy exceeds the pain.

Sow always, ye laborers in the field of the Lord: the seed will be productive at the time when your hopes are at the lowest; or, if it produce nothing, your reward is not the less assured by a Master who recompenses the toil, and not the success.

(17) It is strange to see them crediting so easily the testimony of a lewd woman. This has induced some to believe that she had contrived to save appearances, and preserve the reputation of a decent widow. Whatever weight there is in this conjecture, grace might give sufficient force to the word of a disgraced woman to make her find credence in people's minds, and to make this trust in her neither precipitate nor imprudent.

(18) This woman, according to Origen, represents the Church. We believe at the present day on her testimony; but when we shall have the happiness to see Jesus Christ face to face, we shall say with the Samaritans: *We believe now not for thy saying, for we ourselves have heard him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.*

(19) This was the first people who recognized in Jesus Christ the amiable character of Saviour of the world. There is no doubt but Jesus Christ declared unto them who he was, and we see here what faith they reposed in his words; but, moreover, they who were not Jews, and who expected the Messiah, could not be fettered by the prejudice of those who regarded him as the Saviour of the Jews merely; wherefore they could only expect him as Saviour of the world, and this, therefore, disposed them towards the belief of this article of Christian faith.

(20) Elsewhere we shall explain this sentence, which seemingly Jesus Christ did not advance, but Saint John gives as the motive of the journey he made into Galilee. This forms a very embarrassing difficulty. For the little welcome that a prophet receives in his country was a reason for Jesus to remain in Samaria, where he was so well received, and not to leave it and return to Galilee, which to him was that ungrateful country, whose disgraceful proceedings made him say that a prophet enjoys no consideration in

no honor in his own country. When he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things he had done at Jerusalem on the festival day; for they also went to the festival day. (*a*) And the fame of him went out through the whole country. He taught in the synagogues, and was magnified by all."

CHAPTER X.

AN OFFICER'S SON HEALED.—CURE OF ONE POSSESSED, AND OF THE MOTHER-IN-LAW OF SAINT PETER.—THREE MEN REPROVED.

(*b*) "JESUS came again, therefore, into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain ruler, whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He having heard that Jesus was come from Judea into Galilee, went to him, and prayed him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death." Since he thus had recourse to Jesus Christ, he may have some time previously commenced believing; but his incipient faith was as yet merely a

(*a*) St. Luke, iv. 14, 15. (*b*) St. John, iv. 46–54.

his country and among his kindred. This is explained by saying that what was called the Saviour's country is not entire Galilee, but solely the city of Nazareth, whither he did not wish to return, for the reason assigned by the Evangelist, choosing rather to dwell at Capharnaum or in other parts of Galilee. This explanation, which appeared to me more satisfactory than five or six others given by the interpreters, is still far from being satisfactory. Those who will not content themselves, may consider this passage as not explained: what inconvenience can result from this? There are enough of matters clear in Scripture to support faith and maintain piety. Those who wish to understand every thing are not aware that intelligence of every thing is not granted to all; what you cannot understand another does understand, and the latter in his turn does not understand what you do. Besides, the explanations which are not satisfactory to me are so to others, and there is no decision whether they or I judge the best. Whatever be the case, let us seek and ask for light; yet let us respect the obscurity which should not at all weaken the faith and veneration due to the divine Scriptures, because, as I have said, there remain enough of things so clear as incontestably to assure both one and the other. And reason alone teaches us that we are to judge, not what is clear by what is obscure, but what is obscure by that which is clear.

doubt to be resolved into true faith, once he had seen or experienced himself the truth of those things which he had heard concerning the Saviour. Jesus, aware of his disposition, reproached him for it by these words: "Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not." The father, who was entirely engrossed with his son's danger, "saith to Jesus: Come down, Lord, before that my son die. Go thy way, saith Jesus to him; thy son liveth." This efficacious expression operated simultaneously upon the son's body and the father's soul. "He believed the word which Jesus said to him, and went his way." The next day, "as he was going down, his servants met him, and they brought him word that his son lived. He asked therefore of them the hour wherein he grew better, and they said to him: Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him (1). The father therefore knew that it was at the same hour that Jesus said to him: Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle (2) that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee."

It has been said already that (*a*) "Jesus, leaving the city of Nazareth, came and dwelt in Capharnaum on the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and of Nephthalim." He went there after the miracle at the marriage of Cana, (*b*) "he and his mother, his brethren and his disciples." But as "the pasch of the Jews was at hand, they remained there not many days," during which they scarcely had time to do more than prepare their place of abode. Jesus returned thither again from Cana, (*c*) "and forthwith," when he had arrived there, "upon the Sabbath-day, going into the synagogue, he taught

(*a*) St. Matthew, iv. 13.
(*b*) St. John, ii. 12, 13.
(*c*) St. Mark, i. 21–26; St. Luke, iv. 35.

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(1) One hour after mid-day.

(2) The second which he wrought in this journey from Judea to Galilee; or the second which he wrought in Galilee, counting as the first the miracle at the marriage feast of Cana, which he wrought in like manner after arriving from Judea; or perhaps the Evangelist merely remarks those which Jesus wrought under the special circumstances of his return, because they signalized his arrival in the country, and disposed the people to receive him and hearken to him. The interpreters are divided upon these different explanations, among which it is optional to choose whichever we find best, without being fearful of falling into any prejudicial error.

them. They were astonished at his doctrine; for he was teaching them as one (3) having power, and not as the Scribes. There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, saying: What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know who thou art, the Holy One of God." It is hard to say what motive made him speak thus; but, whether he hoped to soften Jesus Christ by flattery, or whether his design was to spite him in some manner by divulging his divinity, which the Saviour wished to make known by degrees only, still it is quite certain that his intention was bad. Wherefore Jesus Christ, who did not wish to be at all indebted to such evidence, imposed silence upon him (4), "and threatened him, saying: Speak no more, and go

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(3) Jesus spoke as a lawgiver, and the Scribes merely as interpreters of the law. He had the power of working miracles, and they had not. In these two respects he had an advantage which they could neither contest nor assume to themselves. But there were others in which they might have imitated, if not equalled him; and failing in these, their ministry was stripped of dignity, and their word of efficacy. Jesus Christ practised what he taught, while the acts of the Scribes notoriously belied their doctrines. Jesus Christ had only in view the glory of his Father, and the salvation of men, while the Scribes sought nothing but their own glory and the spoils of the widow, whose *house they devoured*, after having insinuated themselves, by their hypocrisy, into esteem and respect. The zeal of Christ was authorized by example, and ennobled by that perfect devotedness which, forgetful of self, seeks only the salvation of those for whom it is exercised. What tone may not such zeal assume?—or who can resist the power which both reason and nature confer upon it? That of the Scribes being, on the contrary, inspired by pride and self-interest, could not be made to appear natural, when it was only artificial; nor dignified, since it must have been changeful as the chameleon—having to pass incessantly from severity to indulgence, from censure to adulation. Nor could it have authority, because through all its grimaces were seen, at one time the shifts and artifices of inordinate vanity, and at another the selfish schemes of interest, these being the evident springs of action, determining and guiding its course.

He who acts not, but only talks, is a babbler. He who speaks for the love of praise is a declaimer. He who speaks only for vile profit might be called a buffoon, if his abuse of the divine word, by employing it for his own base purpose, did not aggravate his crime into sacrilege.

(4) The disciples have imitated their Master in this point. When the demon said by the mouth of the girl having a pythonical spirit: *These men are the servants of the most high God, who preach unto you the way of salvation; Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit: I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to go out from her* (Acts, xvi.) Coming from the father of lies, every thing, even truth, should be suspected. When he speaks truth, he does so to make it subservient to lying.

Like father, like sons, Luther zealously defended the dogma of the real presence

out of the man. The unclean spirit tearing him, had thrown him into the midst, and, crying out with a loud voice, went out of him, and hurt him not at all." This impotent rage was, for those who might have doubted the fact, proof of the possession, and of the divine strength of him before whom all the powers of hell are sheer weakness. (*a*) "There came fear upon all" present, at this prodigy, and all "were amazed (5), insomuch that they questioned among themselves: What thing is this? What is this new doctrine (6)? For with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. And the fame of him was spread forthwith into all the country of Galilee."

Jesus, after this miracle, might have chosen a residence in any of the principal houses in the city; for it would have been considered a high honor to receive and splendidly entertain him. He gave the preference to that house whither friendship called him, and whose poverty attracted instead of repelling him. (*b*) "Immediately rising up out of the synagogue they came, Jesus with James and John, into the house of Simon and Andrew." The occasion which Jesus there found for exercising his charity was a further reason for his visit. "Simon's wife's mother lay in a fit of fever. Forthwith they tell him, and they besought him for her. (*c*) Coming to her, he lifted her up, taking her by the hand: and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them." Many other sick persons desired and hoped for the like favor. But they must be brought to him, and the repose of the Sabbath-day, which it is well known was scrupulously observed by the Jews, had hindered their

(*a*) St. Luke, iv. 36; St. Mark, i. 27, 28.
(*b*) St. Mark, i. 29, 30; St. Luke, iv. 38.
(*c*) St. Mark, i. 31; St. Luke, iv. 39.

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against the Sacramentarians. This seeming zeal imposed upon the simple, and, by combating the Zuinglians, he created Lutherans.

(5) What caused this great astonishment was, that this possessed is the first whom Jesus Christ had delivered. He soon familiarized the Jews to this prodigy, one of these which he worked most frequently; and his disciples subsequently accustomed the universe to it. This power has remained in the Church, who employs it with efficacy in incontestable cases of possession. Yet they are become rare.

(6) Who is this new teacher who speaks such new and such wonderful things?

neighbors from rendering them this charitable office. This obligation ended with the light of day, in accordance with that law of Leviticus: (*a*) "It is a Sabbath of rest, and you shall afflict your souls beginning on the ninth day of the month: from evening until evening you shall celebrate your Sabbaths." (*b*) "It was," therefore, only "when it was evening, after sunset, they brought to Jesus all that were ill and that were possessed with devils. (*c*) All the city was gathered together at the door. Jesus, laying his hands on every one of them, healed many (7) that were troubled with divers diseases: he cast out many devils with his word, and all that were sick he healed, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken," of the evils of the body as well as those of the soul, "by the prophet Isaias: He took our infirmities and bore our diseases. (*d*) The devils went out of many, crying out and saying: Thou art the Son of God. Rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he was Christ."

But he was not to confine his instructions or his bounties to a single city, and he foresaw the efforts that would be made here to arrest him. On which account, (*e*) "rising very early, going out, he went into a desert place, and there he prayed." This was apparently the spot agreed upon, whither "Simon and they that were with him followed after Jesus. And when they had found him, they said to him: All seek for thee. He said to them: Let us go into the neighboring towns and cities, that I may preach there also; for to this purpose am I come." In the mean time, the inhabitants, who became apprised of his departure, rushed out of the city, (*f*) "and the multitudes sought him. They came unto him; and they stayed him that he should not depart from them. To whom he said," as before to his disciples: "To other cities also I must preach the kingdom of God; for therefore am I sent." After this reply,

(*a*) Leviticus, xxiii. 32.
(*b*) St. Mark, i. 32.
(*c*) St. Luke, iv. 40; St. Mark, i. 34, St. Matthew, viii. 16, 17.
(*d*) St. Luke, iv. 41.
(*e*) St. Mark, i. 35–38.
(*f*) St. Luke, iv. 42, 43.

(7) All were healed, as is narrated subsequently, and the word *many* is employed here to signify that they were a great number.

which, whilst it informed them of his resolution to leave them for a time, did not deprive them of all hope of seeing him again, they insisted no more. (*a*) "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom *of God*, healing all manner of sickness and every infirmity among the people. His fame went throughout all Syria, and they presented to him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, such as were possessed by devils, and lunatics (8), and those that had the palsy, and he cured them: and much people followed him from Galilee, from Decapolis (9), from Jerusalem, from Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

(*b*) "Jesus seeing great multitudes about him, gave orders to pass over the water." After he had reached the opposite side, (*c*) "as he walked in the way, a certain Scribe came and said to him: Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou shalt go. Jesus," to teach him by what sacrifices he should merit the honor of being his follower, "saith to him: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (10)." It was not difficult to convince this doctor that the disciple should not expect to be better off than the master, and he must have found

(*a*) St. Matthew, iv. 23–25.
(*b*) St. Matthew, viii. 18.
(*c*) St. Luke, ix. 57; St. Matthew, viii. 19, 20.

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(8) The epileptic and fools with lucid intervals are denominated by this term. Their fits were anciently attributed to lunar influence; and from this they derived their name. In later times the error of the conjecture was ascertained, yet the name has remained; and because the name remains, the error is still prevalent in the minds of the multitude, who easily believe things to be what they are called.

(9) This word signifies the country of ten cities. It was situated to the north and west of the sea of Tiberias, among the tribes of Zabulon and Nephthalim. Writers are not perfectly agreed now-a-days as to its limits, nor upon the names of several of its cities.

(10) Poverty has several degrees among men. That of animals, generally speaking, surpasses that of even those men whom we reckon poorest. Among animals, those which men take no care of, and which, abandoned to themselves, have neither park whither they may retire, nor stable wherein to shelter, may be deemed poorest of all. Yet still these have, some of them their nests, others their dens; and in that respect they have more than Jesus Christ. Such is the poverty to which, for us, the Son of man has reduced himself; he who, at the same time, is the only Son of the Most High If this comparison were not his own, should we dare to make it?

himself far indeed from his expectations, if it be true, as is generally thought, that when tendering himself to Jesus Christ with such apparent generosity of purpose, his sole aim was his own fortune, which he thought to make by attaching himself to this Messiah, of whom he had no more correct ideas than the bulk of his nation. Another truth, of which he seems to have been ignorant, is, that Jesus Christ, who was not always followed by those whom he called to be his followers, never was followed, and never could be followed, except by those whom he first called. (*a*) "Jesus" taught him this by saying "to another" in the throng: "Follow me." This latter was already one of his disciples, but yet not so as to be inseparably attached to him. Having now received such a special call by this second vocation, (*b*) "he said *to him:* Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." He meant by this to assist his father in his extreme old age, and not to quit him until he had closed his eyes. For if, as some have thought, he had received recent intelligence of the death or extremity of his father, it is natural to suppose that this man, who had not as yet fettered himself by final engagements with Jesus Christ, would have hurried off on the spot, and if he were in the act of asking permission from Jesus Christ, even supposing he had asked him, he never would have calmly tarried until the Lord issued the unexpected order to follow him. (*c*) "Jesus said to him: Follow me: Let the dead bury their dead (11)." That is to say, let the children of the world take care of the things of the world (12). "But go thou," he added to him, "and preach the kingdom of God."

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 59. (*b*) St. Matthew, viii. 21. (*c*) St. Matthew, viii. 22.

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(11) Let the dead of soul take the care of burying those who are dead both in soul and body. The world is full of dead, and those who are mourned for are not more to be pitied than the other class, because death of the body, which is the only subject of tears, impresses the last seal upon the death of the soul, for which we never think of shedding tears, although it is only by the latter that the former death is rendered truly deplorable.

(12) This saying of our Saviour still serves to strengthen the constancy of those whom God calls to a perfect state against the efforts which the world makes to retain them. The world even adopts it in worldly concerns, and would be the first to treat as a rebel or a coward whoever would oppose to an order for marching in the service

To these two transactions which are reported in the same way by Saint Matthew and by Saint Luke, the latter adds a third, supposed not to have taken place upon this same day, yet which the Evangelist thought proper to place here, on account of the resemblance it bears to the two preceding. (*a*) "Another (*man also*) said: I will follow thee, Lord, but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house." It does not appear by his request that he sought to pursue a different course of action from that which was subsequently by Jesus Christ himself recommended to the young man to whom he said: (*b*) "Go, sell what thou hast; give to the poor; and come, follow me." But apparently the renunciation he was projecting was one requiring a very long discussion, for (*c*) "Jesus said to him: No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God;" giving him to understand by these words, that if there are in the world certain professions, requiring from those who pursue them connected and uninterrupted attention, such as that of a laborer who never could plough a furrow straight, if he amused himself looking behind, and let the horses tread off right and left as they pleased; such for a much stronger reason is the apostleship, the most laborious, as well as the most sublime of all ministries, and one that requires imperatively the entire man, which is tantamount to the saying of Saint Paul (13): (*d*) "No

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 60, 61.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xix. 21.
(*c*) St. Luke, ix. 62.
(*d*) II. Timothy, ii. 4.

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of a prince, the most pressing duties of nature. Yet the world chafes with indignation when hearing the words applied to the service of God; and cruelty is the mildest term which is then given to piety. Then, is the world in contradiction with itself? No; for it thinks, and, if you press the matter a little, will tell you that a prince is of more consequence than God, the earth is of more value than heaven, and that care of the body is preferable to the salvation of souls.

(13) Perhaps Jesus Christ only wished to give this man notice to weigh maturely the step he was desirous of taking, and thus to anticipate the regret which might be caused by the reminiscence of those goods he had too inconsiderately renounced. Such a result would be doubly mischievous to him, since, when stripped of every thing by a sacrifice he might repent, his repenting thereof would render him unworthy of the perfect state for which he had sacrificed every thing. The explanation inserted in the text is that of the majority of interpreters. This, which is not so followed by the learned, seems to be the popular interpretation. For when it is said, that when put-

man, being a soldier to God, entangleth himself with secular businesses (14)."

CHAPTER XI.

THE TEMPEST STILLED.—TWO DEMONIACS CURED.—SWINE PRECIPITATED INTO THE SEA.—PARALYTIC CURED.—VOCATION OF SAINT MATTHEW.—JESUS EATS AMONGST SINNERS.—DISPUTE RELATIVE TO FASTING.

On that same day (*a*) "Jesus, when evening was come, saith to his disciples: Let us pass over to the other side. And, sending away the multitude, he went into a little ship with them. They launched forth, and there were other ships with him. When they were sailing, Jesus slept. Behold, a great tempest arose in the sea: there came down a storm of wind upon the lake, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was covered. The ship was filled, and they were in danger. (*b*) Jesus was in the hinder part of the ship, sleeping upon a pillow (1). His disciples came to him and awaked him.

(*a*) St. Mark, iv. 35; St. Luke, viii. 22, 23.

(*b*) St. Matthew, viii. 25, 26; St. Mark, iv. 38–40.

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ting hand to the plough no man should look back again, the common meaning is, that when once a first step has been taken, we must support it with constancy, and not retrace our steps.

(14) Of these three men, it is thought that only the second followed Jesus Christ. The conclusion is probable enough, from the fact of his being the only one to whom Jesus Christ said, and that even twice: *Follow me.* He therefore had a vocation, which the two others, who came to offer themselves, had not. Moreover, the difficulty which he made for the present moment sprang from a good principle, and apparently from the persuasion he was under, that the assistance he meant to give his father was to him a duty from which he could not dispense himself without crime. And, in point of fact, before the great maxims of the Gospel had appeared to the world, what obligation could be more binding?

(1) This sleep was not counterfeit, as some have unreasonably contended. Jesus Christ truly slept, and had assumed this weakness of our nature with all the others. Yet there was this difference, that sleep which suspended the use of the senses in the rest of mankind, never deprived him of knowledge. His mind actually knew every thing, and thought of every thing; but he saw nothing, and he heard nothing, with the eyes or ears of the body. He might say of himself, and to the letter: *I sleep; but my heart* (and mind) *watcheth* (Cant. 5).

Lord, say they to him, save us, or we perish. Doth it not concern thee that we perish? Jesus," who chose to see in this reproach only the effect of their terror, merely "saith to them" the following words: "Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith? Then, rising up, he rebuked the wind, and said to the sea: Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was made a great calm; and he said to them" a second time, but in a milder tone than at first, when it required a firm tone to quiet their apprehensions: (*a*) "Why are you fearful? Have you not faith? yet they feared exceedingly;" but their fear was now of a very different sort; "and they said one to another: Who is this, thinkest thou, that he commandeth both the winds and the sea; and both wind and sea obey him?"

It has been thought that the demons had excited the frightful tempest we have just spoken of. The following narrative, by informing us what interest they had in thwarting this journey, gives ground to the conjecture:—When the calm returned, they continued to sail onward, (*b*) "and they came over the strait of the sea, on the other side of the water, to the country of the Gerasens, which is over against Galilee. As Jesus went out of the ship, there met him two that were possessed with devils, coming out of the sepulchres, exceeding fierce, so that none could pass by that way." One of the two, apparently the best known, and, for this reason, the only one spoken of by two of the three Evangelists who recount this fact, (*c*) "had a devil now a very long time," and that in a very violent manner. "He wore no clothes; neither did he abide in a house, but in the sepulchres. No man now could bind him, not even with chains. For having been often bound with fetters and chains, he had burst the chains and broken the fetters in pieces, and no one could tame him. He was always day and night in the monuments (2), and in the mountains, crying, and cutting himself with

(*a*) St. Mark, iv. 40; St. Luke, viii. 35.

(*b*) St. Mark, v. 1; St. Luke, viii. 26, 27; St. Matthew, viii. 28.

(*c*) St. Luke, viii. 27; St. Mark, v. 3–6.

(2) The sepulchres of the Jews were outside the towns. They were grottoes built of stone and brick, like our cellars, or hewn out of the rock, as was that of Jesus Christ; which shows that they were spacious enough for a living man to dwell therein. We

stones. (*a*) Seeing Jesus afar off, he ran, and adored him; and *they both* cried out," at the same time, or rather the demons, by their organ: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time (3)? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not," added the devil who possessed the unfortunate man we have just been speaking of. "For Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to go out of the man, and said unto him: Go out of the man, thou unclean spirit." When the unclean spirit still lingered, "Jesus," who desired to make manifest the splendor of his victory over the powers of hell, (*b*) "asked him: What is thy name? My name is Legion, he said, for we are many. Because [in reality] many devils were entered into him. The demons," forced by the word of Jesus to depart thence, (*c*) "besought him much that he would not drive them out of the country, and that he would not command them to go into the abyss. There was then a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain. The devils besought him, saying: If thou cast us out hence, send us into the swine, that we may enter into them (4). Jesus immediately gave leave to them; and the unclean spirits going out, entered into the

(*a*) St. Matthew, viii. 29; St. Mark, v. 7; St. Luke, viii. 29; St. Mark, v. 8.

(*b*) St. Luke, viii. 30, 31, 32; St. Mark, v. 9, 10.

(*c*) St. Matthew, viii. 31; St. Mark, v. 12, 13.

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also read of the sepulchre of Jesus Christ, that Peter and John entered there, as well as the holy women who came to embalm the body of the Saviour.

(3) This saying induced several ancient interpreters of respectable authority to believe that the demons were not as yet tormented, and that they should not commence their torments until after the last judgment. This opinion is now-a-days abandoned, and the prevailing one now in the Church is, that the demons suffer, and have suffered from the time of their fall; and that, wherever they go, they carry their hell along with them. Yet they retain a relic of liberty, and the pleasure of doing injury. Now, they will lose both one and the other when, after the last judgment, they shall be closed up in the abyss, whence they shall never more be permitted to emerge. They were apprehensive lest Jesus Christ, who waged against them so terrible a war, might precipitate them there *before that time*. Hence their complaints and their entreaties *not to command them to go into the abyss*.

(4) Among the many motives which are supposed to have induced them to make such a demand, the most likely is, that, unable any longer to torment men in their bodies and in their souls, they desired to be allowed to cause them damage in their goods.

swine. The herd, being about two thousand, ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and they perished in the waters (5). (*a*) Which when they that fed them saw done, they fled, and told in the city and in the villages every thing; and concerning them that had been possessed by the devil. The whole city went out to meet Jesus, to see what was done. (*b*) They came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were departed sitting at his feet, clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid. They also that had seen told them in what manner he had been dealt

(*a*) St. Luke, viii. 34; St. Matthew, viii. 33, 34.

(*b*) St. Luke, viii. 35; St. Mark, v. 15, 16.

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(5) To say the least, it would be very improper to imagine that, in granting this leave, Jesus Christ committed a wrong towards those to whom the flock belonged. *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.*—Psalm xxiii. Wherefore, he can take from us, when he pleases, those goods which we hold from his pure liberality; and the religious man says then, as the holy man, Job: *The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.* Yet still, we are surprised that Jesus Christ, the meekest of all men, whose every step was marked by so many benefits, should have caused, or at least permitted, on this single occasion, a species of damage. The answer given is:—1st. That in transferring the swine to the power which the demons exercised previously over men, he performed a much greater good than the evil which he permitted; for, whatever notions on the subject may be entertained by certain modern philosophers, two men, or even one man, is of more value than two thousand swine. 2d. Jesus Christ punished the Gerasenians. If Jews, they deserved this; for keeping, as they did, such a great quantity of these animals, the use of which was interdicted by law, was furnishing an immediate occasion of prevarication to all the people of the surrounding district. But some have thought the inhabitants of Geresa were Greeks, and a portion of the colony of Gadara, an adjacent city, where the emperors had granted a right to the Greeks to form an establishment. In this case, they, too, deserved to be punished, on account of their excessive attachment to these vile animals, which they preferred to the word of God, that Jesus Christ came to announce to them. This is apparent by the prayer they made Jesus Christ, to retire from them, not venturing to endeavor to force him. Now, not to prefer God to those goods which he has given to us, deserves that he should take them from us. May we not add, that he then takes them away in point of fact? or that he only leaves them for the misfortune of those who, by this unworthy preference, deserve no favor on his part, or only merit those goods, the possession of which is of greater mischief than their privation?

The permission to enter into the swine, which was asked by the demons, and granted by Jesus Christ, further teaches us, that the demon can do nothing, in the whole compass of nature, which God does not wish to allow him. Let us, therefore, fear neither the demon, nor all the powers of hell, of earth, and of heaven; but Him by whom alone all the powers of heaven, of earth, and of hell become fearful.

with who had the devil, and concerning the swine. (*a*) Then all the multitude of the country of the Gerasens besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear (6)." Jesus punished this prayer, by acceding to it;—"he, going up into the ship, returned back again. When he went up into the ship, he that had been so highly troubled with the devil besought him that he might be with him." It is not mentioned whether gratitude for such a great blessing, or the dread of a second possession, inspired this prayer. It may have sprung from both motives. But, whatever was the motive, Jesus, who had other designs upon him, "admitted him not;" and, substituting another sort of apostleship for that to which he refused him admission, (*b*) "saith to him: Go into thy house, to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had mercy on thee. He went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him, and all men wondered.

"When Jesus had passed again in the ship over the strait, a great multitude assembled together unto him: for they were all waiting for him." He did not stop long among them; and (*c*) "again, after" an absence of "some days, he entered into Capharnaum," which here is called "his own city," on account of its being his usual residence. "It was heard that he was in the house." We may presume that this was still the house of Peter and Andrew. "Many came together, so that there was no room; no, not even at the door. (*d*) Jesus spoke to them the word. He sat teaching; and there were also" in the assembly "Pharisees and doctors of the law

(*a*) St. Luke, viii. 37; St. Mark, v. 18.
(*b*) St. Mark, v. 19–21; St. Luke, viii. 40.
(*c*) St. Matthew, ix. 1; St. Mark, ii. 1, 2.
(*d*) St. Luke, v. 17.

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(6) Interest had truly as great a share in this prayer as fear, unless, perhaps, their fear was exclusively produced by interest. Thus, under all the circumstances of the case, these subtle Gerasenians concluded that the herd of swine was much more *useful to the State* than was Jesus Christ and his doctrine. It would not be difficult to find their apology in the writings of some of our *good patriots*. [Our author here alludes to the utilitarians of the old French School.]

sitting by, that were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was to heal them. (*a*) Behold, men came to him, bringing one sick of the palsy, who was carried by four, and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the roof, uncovered the roof where he was, and, opening it, let him down through the tiles, with his bed," and laid him "in the midst" of the *assembly* "before Jesus. (*b*) Jesus seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy (7): Son, be of good heart, thy sins are forgiven thee." There were, as we have said, sitting there some of the Scribes, or doctors of the law. These Scribes and the Pharisees thought and said within themselves: (*c*) "Why doth this man speak thus? He blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God only (8)? Jesus presently knowing in his spirit (9) that they so thought

(*a*) St. Mark, ii. 3; St. Luke, v. 18, 19.
(*b*) St. Mark, ii. 5, 6; St. Matthew, ix. 2.
(*c*) St. Luke, vi. 2; St. Mark, ii. 6, 7, 8; St. Matthew, ix. 4.

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(7) The cure of the body can be obtained by the faith of another, but not the remission of sins. Yet here there is only mention made of the faith of those parties who had carried the patient laboring under the palsy; and it is when *seeing their faith*, that Jesus Christ said to him, *thy sins are forgiven thee.* This raises a difficulty, which we must resolve. The faith of the paralytic, which here is not spoken of, is not, nevertheless, excluded. We ought, therefore, to think he had this faith, and with it contrition, without which no adult has ever obtained, or shall ever obtain, the remission of his sins. When, therefore, this remission is here attributed to the faith of the *bearers*, this can only be, inasmuch as Jesus Christ, touched by this faith, had given to the paralytic faith, and all the other dispositions necessary to justification. There is still another truth insinuated in these words of Jesus Christ, viz., that sin is often the cause of bodily infirmity, the cure of which may be one of the effects of conversion.

(8) Now, Jesus Christ is God: wherefore he had this power, and, in point of fact, he exercised it at this moment. Still, let us remark that he did not say to the paralytic that he remitted him his sins, but that his sins were remitted; which is very different. For, supposing that Jesus Christ had only been a prophet, he might have known by revelation that God had remitted the sins of this man; and his declaring this to the man, as he did, was not arrogating to himself the divine right of remitting them. Hence, no one could conclude from these words that he had arrogated this right to himself, and this was the very point to which their attention should have been directed, since they wished to censure him; but malignity does not reason so closely.

(9) The Spirit of God alone can fathom souls, and penetrate into the most secret

within themselves, saith to them: Why do you think evil in your hearts (10)? Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee? or to say, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk (11)? But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say to thee, said he to the man sick of the palsy: Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. Immediately *the man* arose, in the sight of all, and, taking up his bed, went away to his house, glorifying God. (*a*) The multitudes, seeing it, feared, and glorified God that gave such power to man (12)." And they testified their admiration, some by saying, "We never saw the like;" others, "We have seen wonderful things to-day."

(*b*) "Jesus after these things went forth again to the sea-side. All the multitude came to him, and he taught them," according to

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 8; St. Mark, ii. 12; St. Luke, v. 26, 27.

(*b*) St. Mark, ii. 13, 14; St. Matthew, ix. 9.

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folds of the heart; and he is God, with regard to whom the Spirit of God is termed *his Spirit.*

(10) The answer was easy to every one else but themselves. They were Pharisees; and it is not more natural for birds to fly, and for fishes to swim, than it is for Pharisees to misinterpret whatever is susceptible in the slightest degree of a bad interpretation, even if there were one hundred more degrees of probability for the favorable construction.

(11) 'Tis not more difficult, 'tis even easier to cure a paralytic, than to remit sins. Yet is it much more difficult to impose upon the people as to the cure of a paralytic than about the remission of sins, for we see the first and we do not see the second. But what we see stands as a proof of what we do not see. Therefore, if Jesus Christ does not impose, when he said to the paralytic, *arise, take up thy bed, and go,* it follows that he has not imposed, when he said, *thy sins are forgiven thee.* The second is as possible to him as the first, and what is equally possible is equally easy to him. All this bears upon the fundamental principle of all revealed religion: *He incontestably speaks the truth, who, in order to prove the truth of what he says, works incontestable miracles.*

(12) The power of remitting sins, much more than the power of curing maladies. This was the end of the Incarnation of the Son of God—the object of his labors—the fruit of his sufferings—and the most necessary, as well as the most precious, of all the favors he could procure for human nature. From thence originates the surprise, the admiration, and the joy of mankind. O, ye nations, be glad and rejoice; never cease praising the God of Mercy, who has condescended to communicate to men this divine prerogative, which seems to be of all his rights the most incommunicable.

his custom. "When he was passing on from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, *otherwise* Levi, the son of Alpheus, (*a*) sitting at the receipt of custom, in the custom-house, and saith to him: Follow me. He arose up, and leaving all things, followed him." Still he wished to acknowledge beforehand his gratitude, after the fashion of a converted publican, and in order to do so, "he made him a great feast in his own house. It came to pass, as Jesus was sitting at table in the house of Levi, there was a great company of publicans and sinners sat down with him and his disciples, for they were many, who also followed him." And we must remark, in reference to this, a fact which will often appear in this history, viz., that Jesus was constantly cherished by sinners and hated by rigorists. These, therefore, that is to say, "the Scribes and Pharisees, seeing that he ate with publicans and sinners, said to his disciples: Why doth your Master eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"

They addressed themselves to these, undoubtedly, because they deemed them less capable of answering than their Master. Perhaps they still hoped that, by giving them a bad impression of Jesus, they could detach them from him. But "Jesus hearing it, saith to them: They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill (13)." A saying which should have made them feel that there was no more sense in the reproach which they made him, than there would have been in finding fault at a physician's visiting the sick or those affected with a plague. He then added, blending his usual instruction with self-justification: (*b*) "Go, then, and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy, and not sacrifice (14). For I am not come to call the just, but sin-

(*a*) St. Luke, v. 28, 29; St. Mark, ii. 15–17. (*b*) St. Matthew, ix. 13.

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(13) To go visit persons afflicted with contagious diseases is temerity in those who can render them no service; it is charity in the physician, who still is not exempt from rashness, if he visit them without adopting precautions and preventives. One man alone was exempted from this rule; that was the Man-God.

(14) A Hebrew idiom, meaning, *I love mercy better than sacrifice*, which was commanded, instead of being interdicted; but mercy was preferred to it. But if mercy excels sacrifice, there is nothing, therefore, in religion over which it should not take precedence. The entire morality of the Gospel is hinged on this maxim, which is not so peculiar to Christianity as not to have also belonged to the Old Law, since this text to

ners (15)." Whence it followed that the more sinful they were, the better he worked out his mission by seeking them out, and associating with them.

The Pharisees, baffled upon this point, sought to renew the impeachment; but to give greater weight to the fresh reproach which they were framing against Jesus Christ, they took the precaution of associating themselves with the disciples of John. The latter, as well as the Pharisees, were accustomed to practise extraordinary fasting, to which Jesus Christ had not subjected those who professed to follow him. These fasts were not prescribed by law; they might, therefore, be observed or omitted at pleasure. But although practices of devotion are matters of free choice, each individual is prepossessed in favor of his own; and it is very rare for this prejudice to stop short of condemning those who do not conform to those practices. It was apparently this weakness which drew the disciples of John into the plotting of the Pharisees. (*a*) "They came

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 14; St. Mark, ii. 18; St. Luke, v. 33, 34.

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which Jesus Christ here refers the Pharisees is from the Prophet Osee. These men, on the contrary, preferred all the rest of religion to charity, which was, accurately speaking, turning religion upside down, by placing last of all what should occupy the first place.

There is no neglect of divine worship in leaving the sacrifice to exercise charity towards man. This is rendering to God the worship most pleasing to him. God has no need of our sacrifice, and he loves men: these two truths heighten this worship into a very excellent religion. By this we recognize the perfect independence and infinite goodness of God, those two attributes which entitle him the most to the homage of our minds and of our hearts.

This maxim has given rise to an abuse, viz., limiting religion to doing good towards men. It is only in the competition of both duties, when they come in collision, that we should prefer the service of our neighbor to the worship of God; and then we should merely do so because God wishes us so to act. To prefer, therefore, the external duties of religion to charity towards our neighbor is Pharisaical; and to comprise all religion in the love and service of our neighbor, is acknowledging our fellow-citizens, and disowning our King—embracing our brethren, and denying our Father; it is impiety—it is declared rebellion against the greatest and best of all kings and of all fathers.

(15) This ought not to hinder us from believing that Jesus Christ came to save all men; for all have sinned, saith Saint Paul, *and are in want of the glory of God*, that is to say, of the grace of the Redeemer. An ironical meaning is also given to these words, in reference to the Pharisees: You take scandal at seeing me prefer the company of sinners to yours; are you ignorant, then, that *I am come to call sinners, and not the just*, such as you pretend to be?

and said to Jesus: Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast often and make prayers; but thine eat and drink, and do not fast? He said to them: Can the children of the bridegroom (16) mourn, and can you make them fast whilst the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away, and then they shall fast (17)."

Therefore, Jesus did not dispense his disciples from fasting; he merely disposed them to do so at a more convenient time; and in order to make them better understand that in acting thus he did not mean to flatter their passions, but to accommodate himself to their weakness, (*a*) "he spoke a similitude to them. No man putteth a piece from a new garment upon an old garment, otherwise he both rendeth the new, and the piece taken from the new agreeth not with the old." It occurs also that "the new pieceing taketh away from the old, and there is made a greater rent. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; otherwise the new wine will break the bottles, and it will be spilled, and the bottles will be lost. But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved. And no man drinking old hath presently a mind to new; for he saith: The old is better." This means that, generally speaking, the more excellent things are in themselves, the less likely are they to be good for beginners. We should proportion ourselves to their weakness. Perfection should only be presented to them at a distance, and as if it were rather an object for their admiration than for their imitation; they should be merely invited, and not seemingly forced to approach it, lest, by endeavoring to form perfect

(*a*) St. Luke, v. 36–39; St. Mark, ii. 21, 22.

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(16) We may recollect that John, in one of the testimonies he rendered to Jesus Christ, designated him by the title of bridegroom. The disciples of John could not have forgotten this; and Jesus Christ, in making use of the same expression, gives ground for believing that they introduced the expression here.

(17) We are almost tempted to smile at the extravagance of heretics. The Calvinists rejected the fast of Lent, because Jesus Christ said that his disciples should not fast while he was with them, although he added that they should fast after he was taken away. And because he said that they should fast when he was taken away—that is to say, if you will, immediately after his death—Montanus and Priscilla, according to the report of Saint Jerome, placed Lent between Easter and Pentecost.

men of those who have but recently become just, relapsing sinners may be the result of such mistaken zeal. Thus Jesus instructed his Church; and whilst he seemed merely answering an ill-founded reproach, he gave to his present and future ministers these admirable lessons of mildness and of condescension.

CHAPTER XII.

A WOMAN HEALED OF AN ISSUE OF BLOOD.—THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS RESUSCITATED.—THE BLIND SEE.—DEVILS CAST OUT.

(*a*) "As he was speaking these things unto them nigh unto the sea, a ruler of the synagogue (1) named Jairus came up, and seeing Jesus, falleth down at his feet, adored him, beseeching him that he would come into his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying." Perhaps he thought that Jesus, who had power to cure the sick, had not that of raising the dead; and he may also have been one of those who considered the Saviour's presence necessary for a miracle. For this reason (*b*) "he besought him much, saying: My daughter is at the point of death; come lay thy hand upon her, that she may be safe, and may live. Jesus rising up, went with him, and followed him, with his disciples."

(*c*) "It happened as he went that he was thronged by the multitudes. There was a certain woman *there* who was troubled with an

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 18; St. Mark, v. 21, 22; St. Luke, viii. 41.
(*b*) St. Mark, v. 23, 24; St. Matthew, ix. 19.
(*c*) St. Luke, viii. 42; St. Mark, v. 25–27; St. Matthew, ix. 20, 21.

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(1) He who presided at the meetings of the Synagogue, which were held on Sabbath days. The place where they were held was called Synagogue, a Greek word meaning *assembly*. At these meetings the Holy Scripture was read, exhortations given, and psalms sung, the only exercises of religion allowed the Jews outside the Temple of Jerusalem. Some authors confidently assert that before the destruction of this great city, it had not less than four hundred and eighty of these synagogues. Every one knows that the Jews still have them in several cities of Europe where they are tolerated.

issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing the better, but rather worse; *this woman then*, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the crowd behind him, and (*a*) touched the hem of his garment, for she said to herself: If I shall touch only his garment, I shall be healed. Forthwith the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body she was healed of the evil (2). Immediately Jesus, knowing in himself the virtue which had proceeded from him, turning to the multitude, said: Who hath touched my garment? And all denying, Peter and they that were with him said: Master, the multitudes throng and press thee, and dost thou say, Who touched me? Jesus said: Somebody hath touched me, for I know that virtue is gone out from me. And he looked about to see her who had done this:" for he was not ignorant of her, but he thus conformed himself to our method of acting; and because he wished that the miracle which he had wrought should be known, he thus prepared the way for its manifestation, by obliging her to speak whose deposition alone could disclose and prove the fact. For (*b*) "the woman knowing what was done in her, seeing that she was not hid, fearing and trembling, came and fell down before his feet, and told him all the truth, and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was immediately healed. (*c*) Jesus turning, and seeing her, said to her: Be of good heart, daughter; thy faith hath made thee whole. Go in peace, and be thou whole of thy disease. And the woman was made whole from that hour," perfectly and without any relapse.

As (*d*) "Jesus was yet speaking, there cometh one to the ruler of

(*a*) St. Mark, v. 29, 30; St. Luke, viii. 45, 46; St. Mark, v. 32.
(*b*) St. Mark, v. 33; St. Luke, viii. 47.
(*c*) St. Matthew, ix. 22; St. Mark, v. 34.
(*d*) St. Luke, viii. 49.

(2) The robe worn by Jesus Christ has, therefore, wrought a miracle. Calvin, who was apprehensive, and reasonably so, that the inferences from this miracle must be favorable to relics, finds out indiscreet zeal and a dash of superstition in the action of this woman. Jesus Christ finds in it faith: he openly praises this faith; he accords to the merit of this faith a cure; and this faith, by the report of the three evangelists, is the same which made this woman say, *If I shall touch only his garment, I shall be healed.* Who are we to believe in this matter?

the synagogue, saying to him: Thy daughter is dead, trouble him not" uselessly. Jairus, whose faith had received a new impulse from the miracle of which he had just been a witness, did not despair for all that. (*a*) "Lord," said he, "my daughter is even now dead; but come lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live." For thus one of the evangelists makes him speak; and they are all unanimous in placing here this expression, which is different from what the other evangelists make him utter, who only make him speak of the extremity of his daughter. (*b*) "Jesus hearing this word, answered the father of the maid: Fear not, believe only, and she shall be safe. When he was come to the house, he suffered not any man to go in with him but Peter, and James, and John, and the father and mother of the maiden. He saw the minstrels (3) and the multitude making a tumult, weeping and wailing much; all mourned for her. Why make you this ado (saith he to them going in), and weep? (*c*) Give place, for the girl is not dead, but sleepeth (4). And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. He having put them all out, taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with them, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. (*d*) Taking her by the hand, he cried out to her: Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted: Damsel, I say to thee arise. (*e*) Her spirit returned. She arose immediately, and walked. She was twelve years old. Jesus commanded that something should be given her to eat. Her parents were astonished. He charged them strictly to

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 18.
(*b*) St. Luke, viii. 50, 51; St. Matthew, ix. 23; St. Mark, v. 38.
(*c*) St. Matthew, ix. 24; St. Luke, viii. 53; St. Mark, v. 40.
(*d*) St. Luke, viii. 54; St. Mark, v. 41.
(*e*) St. Luke, viii. 55, 56; St. Mark, v. 42, 43; St. Matthew, ix. 26.

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(3) It was a custom common to both Jews and Gentiles to hire flute-players, who accompanied with mournful airs the lamentations which were made at funerals. Although we are ignorant whence the usage derived its origin, the probability is, that the Jews borrowed it from the Gentiles. If we were to conclude from thence, as some writer has done, that the flute-players in question here were Gentiles, must we not contend also that all our painters are Italians, inasmuch as painting comes from Italy?

(4) A death which was to be confined, by so speedy a resurrection, to scarcely the duration of a short slumber, should be called sleep rather than death.

tell no man what was done (5)." *Yet* "the fame hereof went abroad into all that country."

(*a*) "As Jesus passed from thence" into the house where he dwelt, "there followed him two blind men, crying out and saying: O, son of David, have mercy on us." It was undoubtedly in order to try their faith that Jesus, who heard them, declined stopping. "When he was come to the house, the blind men," who had still kept following him, "came to him, and he saith to them: Do you believe that I can do this unto you? Yea, Lord, they say to him. Then he touched their eyes, saying: According to your faith be it done unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus strictly charged them, saying: See that no man know this. But they going out, spread his fame abroad in all that country."

"When they were gone out, they brought him a dumb man possessed with a devil." An evangelist conveys to us that he was dumb by the influence of the devil himself, because the devil hindered the possessed man from speaking, thus informing us that this hindrance did not come upon the man from any natural cause, but from the demon tying his tongue. This construction seems obvious, from the

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 27–34.

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(5) There were too many witnesses of the death to give a mysterious character to the resurrection, and the secrecy imposed by Jesus Christ upon this occasion can merely apply to the mode in which he wrought the miracle. Jesus Christ exacted the like secrecy for the ensuing miracle, and in some other transactions. We may be asked what reason had he for this line of conduct, he who wrought publicly so great a number of miracles, and who, far from desiring to make a mystery of them, frequently gave orders to publish them. Out of the several reasons assigned, the only one which has some probability is, that he wished to inform his disciples, and all those to whom he should communicate the gift of miracles, to conceal them as much as in their power, and thus steal away from the applause of men. Many saints have profited from this lesson, and we know the precautions they have taken to withdraw from the eyes of the world the wonders which God operated by their means. Thus is explained why Jesus Christ wished some of his miracles to be kept secret, but not why he pursued this course in regard of such and such a miracle more than any other. Not that no reasons are advanced by those who undertake to explain every thing, but no satisfactory reason has been put forward. Let us be content to know that he had reasons highly worthy of his wisdom, deduced from the circumstances of time, place, and person. The secret was not always kept by those upon whom it was enjoined. Whatever the rigid Calvin may think, Catholic divines do not tax them with this as a crime. Gratitude, which made them speak, excused this want of submission to orders which they merely attributed to the modesty of their benefactor.

manner in which the cure is recounted; for, "after the devil was cast out, the dumb man spoke. The multitudes wondered, saying: Never was the like seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said: By the prince of devils he casteth out devils."

Jesus did not then condemn this blasphemy, which perhaps had not been uttered in his presence. We shall see, upon another occasion, that he answered it in a manner which covered with shame those who dared to advance the like within his hearing; the result was, that they became his irreconcilable enemies. For to be utterly devoid of blame is the highest offence in envious eyes.

SECOND PASSOVER.

Jesus left the Pharisees of Galilee for a time, to go seek those of the capital. If the latter were not more malignant, they were more formidable in point of number, as also by their proselytes and the facility there exists in large cities for caballing and exciting popular outbreaks. But it was not for the purpose of warring with them that the mildest of men came to meet them; he sought only to enlighten and convert them. It was a religious motive that induced him to make this journey. It was the feast of the Jews, which we believe, with many interpreters, to have been that of Passover, were it merely for the reason of its being called here simply "the Feast." It is known that this was the principal of the three feasts for which the law ordained that every Jew should repair to Jerusalem. Jesus, the author of the law, had voluntarily made himself a subject of the law, and he always observed it with the most perfect punctuality. He came, therefore, to the feast with his disciples, and a miraculous cure, by which he signalized his arrival, was for the Pharisees an occasion to calumniate him; to him an opportunity for instructing them by an admirable discourse. Here is the manner in which these things occurred.

CHAPTER XIII.

PROBATICA.—A MAN INFIRM THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS HEALED.—DISCOURSE OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE JEWS.

(*a*) "THERE [*was*] (1) at Jerusalem a pond *called* Probatica (2), which in Hebrew is named Bethsaida, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, of withered, waiting

(*a*) St. John, v. 2–47.

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(1) We read in the text: *There is* at Jerusalem a pond.....which has five porches. This form of expression seems to show clearly that Jerusalem still existed when Saint John wrote this. Still the opinion of the most ancient doctors, and of those whose authority ranks highest, is, that Saint John did not compose his Gospel until several years after the ruin of Jerusalem. In referring to their authority, I own I would have desired to find an answer to this difficulty, which they seem not even to have thought of.

Two things are possible, each of which, if true, would suffice to reconcile Saint John's form of expression with the date which all antiquity assigns to his Gospel: 1st. After the capture of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus, the town was not so utterly destroyed as not to leave some edifices standing, and some Jews occupying them. Some writers even maintain that they still preserved there some synagogues until the time of their last, and their utter and irrevocable expulsion, which was under the Emperor Adrian. The pond and the porticoes might then still exist, and Saint John could speak of them as of things actually existing. 2d. Saint John, who according to constant tradition did not publish his Gospel until after the capture of Jerusalem, might very well have written previously some passages which he may have inserted afterwards in the body of the work. We have now only to suppose that the cure of the paralytic was one of these passages written before the capture of Jerusalem, and the difficulty will be resolved, at least for those who are satisfied to be content with these suppositions.

(2) This Greek word *probatica* signifies sheep-pond. This name was given either because it lay near the gate by which the sheep entered into the city, or because this pond was in the market where they were exposed for sale, or because they were washed there before being immolated, or perhaps because the waters which had been made use of in washing the immolated victims were brought thither by subterraneous channels. This last conjecture has induced several to think that it was for this reason God had communicated to these waters the miraculous virtue which is about to be related, and which made them be regarded as a figure of the waters of baptism. These waters extract from the blood of the Lamb immolated for the sins of the world, the vivifying virtue which communicates to souls the supernatural life of grace, by a miracle far superior to all cures and all corporeal resurrections.

The Anabaptists regard as fabulous this miraculous sheep-pond spoken of by Saint

for the moving of the water. An angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond, and the water was moved. He that went down first into the pond after the motion of the water was made whole, of whatsoever infirmity he lay under. There was a certain man there, that had been eight-and-thirty years under his infirmity. When Jesus had seen *him* lying, and knew he had been now a long time, he saith to him: Wilt thou be made whole? The infirm man answered: Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond; for whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me. Arise, Jesus saith to him, take up thy bed and walk. Immediately the man was made whole, and he took up his bed, and walked. It was the Sabbath that day. The Jews therefore said to him that was healed: It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. He answered: He that made me whole, he said to me: Take up thy bed and walk."

The man was perfectly justified in doing as he did by the order of him who had so miraculously effected his cure, whilst the author of that order was justified at the same time by the miracle which he had wrought. The Jews, who merely sought to criticise, seemed to pay no attention to what this man stated about his recovery, and they did not ask him, Who is that man who cured thee? but only, "Who is that man who said to thee: Take up thy bed and walk? But he who was healed knew not who it was; for Jesus went aside from the multitude standing in the place. Afterwards, Jesus findeth him in the temple, and saith to him: Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest some worse thing happen thee. The man went his way, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole," and not that it was Jesus who had given him the order to take away his bed. This shows that gratitude prompted him to speak, and that his intention was not to denounce Jesus as a violator of the Sabbath, but to make him known as author of the miracle.

Yet "the Jews," who were only willing to see in him the first of

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John, because Josephus, the Jewish historian, does not speak of it. If Saint John did not speak of it, and Josephus did, apparently they would believe it. We believe just whoever we please when we believe only what we like.

these two characters, "therefore did persecute Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath:" for here is the commencement of that complaint, which they renewed every time that the occasion presented itself, although the reproaches which they cast upon Jesus on this subject turned always to their own confusion, by the replies he made, and which they never could answer. Still, once that hatred had induced them to say: "He breaks the Sabbath," they never ceased repeating it; and passion, which blindfolded them, so as to hinder them from seeing the absurdity of this accusation, steeled their hearts, rendering them insensible of the disgrace which recoiled back upon themselves every time they renewed the charge. Here, then, is the answer which Jesus then made. "My Father worketh until now (3); and I work." Sublime expression! signifying that the action which Jesus Christ had just performed was above all criticism, because it was as much the action of his Father as his own. Whence it followed, that as there was existing between him and his Father unity of action, there must also have been unity of nature; and that when he called God his father, he did not do so in the sense of adoption, which was not unknown to the Jews, and would not, therefore, have scandalized them, but in the sense of generation, by virtue of which he attributed to himself divine nature, and perfect equality with God. I say that this was a manifest consequence, for so the Jews understood it; and as their envy redoubled in proportion to the great things which Jesus disclosed to them in reference to himself, "they sought the more to kill him, because he did not only break the Sabbath, but also said God was his father, making himself equal to God (4)." To which he replied by the

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(3) *My Father worketh until now*, that is to say, there is no time or no day during which my Father doth not act, not excepting the Sabbath-day. This is the seventh day, upon which day God rested, after employing six days in the creation of the world. He wished that in memory of this rest the seventh day might be consecrated to him by a religious stillness. Yet God only rested inasmuch as he ceased to create new species; for he never ceases working their preservation and their production. The same ceaseless action exists in the Son, and is not distinguished from that of the Father.

(4) If Jesus Christ is not equal to his Father, the duty was imperatively incumbent on him of disabusing the Jews, when they thought they found this equality conveyed by his words. Yet he has not done so, and we are going to hear him express himself upon the point in terms much stronger than those he had heretofore made use of. Wherefore

following discourse, in which two different parts, as it were, are distinguished. The first is the further development of the expression we have just noted, and the direct justification of his own conduct on the present occasion. The second establishes the divinity of his mission, by all the proofs that can render it incontestable. He resumed, therefore, in these terms: "Amen, I say to you, the Son cannot do any thing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing; for what things soever he doth, these the Son also doth in like manner: for the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things which himself doth, and greater works than these will he show him, that you may wonder."

Unity of operation and of nature, and perfect equality between the Father and the Son, are found explained in this passage. Still, it is well to observe that here it is said, the Son cannot do any thing of himself, but only what he seeth the Father doing. Not in the meaning attached to these words by the Arians, viz.:—That he borrows from the Father any knowledge which he had not in himself, or any power in which he was deficient; but, because the Son acts solely through the knowledge and power which he receives from the Father through the eternal generation. This, very far from limiting the one or the other, proves the infinitude of both; for what the Father possesses from all eternity the same doth he communicate in all its plenitude to his Son, without losing any thing for what he gives, or ceasing to possess what he incessantly communicates. It is in this sense that the Son cannot do any thing without the Father. But it is not the less true, as the fathers of the Church said to the Arians, that the Father cannot do any thing without the Son, since the divine nature, which is common to the Father and the Son, cannot divide itself, nor, whilst it acts in the Son, cease to act in the Father.

Yet, as the cure of this man languishing under paralysis was but

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there is no medium: either he possesses divine nature, or he wishes to usurp its honors; and, if not God, he is an impostor. Now, he is not an impostor, according to the avowal of the Arians and Socinians, who, when combating his divinity, nevertheless acknowledge him as the envoy of God, and subscribe to the truth of all his words. This reasoning must ever be a rock against which their hollow subtleties shall dash to pieces.

a slight exertion of the infinite power which the Father has communicated to the Son, Jesus Christ prepares the Jews to see its effects on a more extensive scale, and in a manner more calculated to excite their admiration. "For," said he to them, "as the Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom he will." Therefore the power of giving life, or of raising the dead, is no more restricted in the Father than in the Son; for to say that the Son giveth life to "whom he will," is saying very plainly that his power in this respect is unlimited. And as that great miracle of the general resurrection, in which the Son shall operate conjointly with the Father, must be followed immediately by universal judgment, Jesus Christ takes therefrom an opportunity to declare to the Jews, that, besides the power of resuscitating, he has received from his Father authority to judge, which, in one sense, is peculiarly his own. "For," he also says, "neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father (5)." This is done in the present state of

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(5) The last judgment will be the judgment of God, and, considered as a divine act, will be common to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, because the three persons of the adorable Trinity concur equally in all the actions which God produces beyond himself. By the sacred humanity of the Man-God, which shall serve as their instrument on this occasion, will the three persons exercise this judgment; and so far we see no difference between them. But this humanity, which alone shall appear in this great action, is properly the Son's, who has united himself with it, and not the Father's or the Holy Ghost's, who have not contracted with it a similar union. In this respect judgment belongs more to the Son than to the Father or the Holy Ghost, because, when judging by his humanity, the Son judges by an instrument *united* to himself, whereas the Father and the Holy Ghost judge by an instrument *separated* from them respectively. Divines express themselves thus; and this may be better understood by saying that when judging by the humanity, the Son judges by himself, whereas the Father—and the same may be said of the Holy Ghost—judges by another person than himself, but who at the same time is another self; a fashion of speech which can only have a literal signification when speaking with reference to the three persons of the adorable Trinity.

The Fathers advance several reasons why God wished that judgment should be exercised by the sacred humanity of the Saviour. 1st. To indemnify him for the profound humiliation to which he voluntarily reduced himself, conformably to those words of Saint Paul: *He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. . . . . He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, and unto the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow that are in heaven, on earth, and under the*

existence by those who believe in the Son, and consequently who render him the honors due to the only Son of the Father, and its accomplishment shall be seen in a much more dazzling manner at the day of judgment, when Jesus Christ shall be recognized and honored by all men, not even excepting those who shall have refused to believe in him, but who can now no longer pretend not to know him, when they shall see him come in a cloud of light, full of majesty and glory, armed with might and power, and by the prodigies of his right arm announcing to all nature its Lord and its King. Then, convinced by the evidence of their own eyes, they shall at least recognize him by their involuntary tremor and forced adoration, and they shall have nothing to plead in reply to the sentence by which they shall be declared attainted and convicted of the crime of high treason against the Divine Majesty, for having refused him during life the faith and homage which were due to him; whereby they have as grossly insulted the Father as himself: "For he who honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father, who hath sent him." And he that would simply honor him as an envoy of the Father, could not escape a similar condemnation; because that, not honoring him as the Son, in which quality he has been sent, is equally despising both Father and Son.

Happy those for whom this resurrection shall be the commencement of a life eternally happy! But to this end they must have had share in the first resurrection, which is from the death of sin to

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earth. 2d. To confer on Jesus Christ the special glory of judging those by whom he has been judged, and of justly condemning those by whom he has been unjustly condemned. The latter shall see with unutterable dread the scars of the wounds which their brutal fury imprinted on his innocent flesh, according to these words: *They shall look on him whom they pierced* (St. John, xix. 37). 3d. That men may have a judge to whom they cannot object. He is man like themselves, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. Will they object to him who has only become their judge because he condescended to become their brother? He is their Saviour, who only acquired this qualification at the expense of his peace, his glory, his blood, and his life. Can any one desire the perdition of those for whom he has made such sacrifices? And is not a person a thousand times more culpable for having neglected a salvation which had cost so dearly? *Israel, from thyself cometh thy destruction,* accuse not, therefore, thy judge. His past mercies cannot but authorize present severity, and in dying for thee he has justified by anticipation the sentence of death which he shall pronounce against thee.

the life of grace. In this resurrection the Son doth not less operate than in the other; but here there is one thing which belongs not to the other resurrection, viz., the co-operation of man is requisite. All shall have part in the second, because no one can resist the stern command of Almighty power. Many shall resist the first, and by their resistance exclude themselves from it altogether. For this reason Jesus Christ promises the first to "him who heareth his word;" whereas of the second, he states absolutely and without any condition: "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." Here are his words, continuing his address: "Amen, amen, I say to you, that he who heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting (6) and cometh not into judgment; but is passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say unto you, that the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God (7): and they that hear shall live. For, as the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son also to have life in himself, and he hath given him power to do judgment because he is the Son of man (8). Wonder not at

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(6) There is the principle of this in sanctifying grace, which is the life of the soul—a life which, by its nature, must last always, and which shall procure for the body immortal life, if the possessor of this life doth not voluntarily lose it by sinning again, and by thus inflicting death a second time on the soul.

(7) This is understood to allude to the particular resurrections effected by Jesus Christ, and which he was going to operate again. They are proof by anticipation, and, as it were, the earnest of the general resurrection.

(8) In a book so precise and so profound as Scripture, all the terms must have been weighed. What occasions this reflection is, that it is written that the dead shall hear the voice of *the Son of God*, and that the Son is entitled to judge, because he is *Son of man*. Still it is the same person, and there is no difficulty in saying, the Son of man shall resuscitate the dead, and the Son of God shall judge them; but here is attributed to each of the two natures the act which it shall produce immediately by itself. To the divine nature is attributed resurrection, because nothing but an almighty nature can effect this by its own proper virtue: to human nature is attributed judgment, because the sitting of the judge, the pronouncing of judgment, and every thing of a sensible character in judgment, can be the immediate effect of a limited nature. Yet the right of sovereign judgment over the universe belongs to God alone. And so the Son enjoys it, because he is at the same time Son of God, and, inasmuch as by the personal union of the Word with human nature, humanity has been associated with all the rights of the divinity, who imparts to it the power of doing immediately, and by itself, every thing which is not beyond the sphere of created nature.

this. For the hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." Jesus Christ adds, what is, in two words, an apology for all his acts and judgments, viz., that the former are produced by the power imparted to him by his Father, whose judgments and wishes are equally the rule of his wishes and his judgments: this he expresses by these words: "I cannot of myself do any thing. As I hear, so I judge, and my judgment is just. Because I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me."

He has just announced great things: he is now going to support their truth by great testimony. The first is that of John; for whatever authority the purity of his morals and his irreproachable conduct gave to the statement of Jesus, he does not expect to be believed upon his own simple assertion. "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true (9). There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true." You yourselves have recognized the legitimacy of his testimony; for "you sent to John, and he gave testimony to the truth. But I receive not testimony from man," which is by no means necessary to me. Wherefore it is not for myself, "but I say these things that you may be saved." Besides, this testimony you have chosen is void of all reproach, and I do not now cast any reproach upon it to be reported by you to him. "John was a burning and a shining light. You were willing for a time to rejoice in his light (10)," yet

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(9) If we gave the literal meaning, it would be, My testimony is not *true;* and Jesus Christ would contradict himself, for he says in another place: *Although I give testimony of myself, my testimony is true* (John viii.). No doubt it was true; but if it were single testimony it proved nothing, and the hearers had a right to decline believing upon the maxim that no one can be judge or witness in his own cause. Hence what he acquires by extrinsic testimony is not truth, but legitimate evidence, which renders truth available, and compels it to be received.

(10) Since they sent a deputation to him, with the disposition, for the most part, of recognizing him as the Messiah, supposing he had declared himself such. We say *for the most part,* for the people proceeded in the matter with good faith, and the perverse intentions spoken of elsewhere are only attributed to the Scribes and Pharisees. John referred back this honor to him to whom it belonged. Yet the Jews did not believe him,

you turned away your eyes from this light, which seemed at first so welcome. But although he was worthy of all belief, "I have a greater testimony than that of John;" even that of my Father. "For the" *miraculous* "works which the Father hath given me to perfect, the works themselves which I do, give testimony of me, that the Father hath sent me, and the Father himself who hath sent me hath given testimony of me. Neither have you heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape;" for God, who is a pure spirit, comes not under the observation of the senses; but by the works which he has given me to perform, and which are, as it were, his voice, he has made sensible the testimony which he has rendered concerning me; "and you have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent, him you believe not."

Meantime you deem yourselves the faithful depositories and minute searchers of this divine word. You "search the Scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting. The same are they that give testimony of me, and you will not come to me that you may have life (11)," which they only promise you through me. You remove from, whilst you seem to be in search of it, because you withdraw from the only road that conducts to it. Whereas, if I seek to attract you to me, I do so with a view to your interest, and not my own. "I receive not glory from men. But" you, who wish to justify by the motive of the love of God your unwillingness to hear me, "I know that you have not the love of God in you," and the conduct you pursue towards me is proof of this; for "I am come in the name of my Father, and you receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him you will receive (12)." Yet your incre-

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although much more deserving of credit when rendering this testimony to another than if he had rendered it to himself.

(11) Who is there who would not have life, and above all others, eternal life? The Jews wished for it, and we also wish for it. But the Jews *did not wish* to have it through faith in Jesus Christ; and *we do not wish to have it* through the observance of the law of Jesus Christ. They wished for the end like ourselves: like them, we do not wish for the means. They perished with such a wish; and what can we expect but to perish like them, if we do not pass from this wish (which I know not whether to call chimerical or hypocritical) to a sincere, absolute, and efficacious wish, tending to the end by the means, and embracing every thing without exception and without reserve?

(12) This is not merely a threat, 'tis prophetic of what was going to happen immedi-

dulity should not excite surprise. There is nothing in faith that flatters human pride; being little esteemed amongst men, faith attracts the complacency of God alone. "How can you believe, who receive glory one from another, and the glory which is from God

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ately after the death of Jesus Christ. All those who wished to assume to themselves the title of Messiah, found followers amongst them, and the prodigy of their credulity in this regard equals that of their incredulity. Terrible, yet just chastisement of that voluntary blindness which, after having closed their eyes to the truth, renders them the dupes, and at last the victims of the grossest illusions and the most absurd lies! Let us dread this, since it is daily renewed before our eyes. When men decline hearkening to the voice of those whom God has established as interpreters of his oracles, they listen to others, for after all the people do not know how to construct for themselves a system of religion, and error, like *faith, cometh* to them *by hearing* (Rom. x. 17). Wherefore to them it is a necessity to hearken to other masters; and to what masters do they hearken? First of all, to men without title, without credentials, without mission, *who bear witness of themselves*, who must be credited on their word, when, with a boldness as ridiculous as 'tis insolent, they come and tell, *I alone* am more enlightened in matters of religion, I understand Scripture better than all the doctors and all the pastors of the Church. But this is merely the beginning of the illusion. After having rejected those really sent by God, the people receive as envoys of God every one who presents himself before them. By means of considerable effrontery and some strokes of jugglery, a man, qualified at most to figure as a mountebank, sets the rumor afloat that he is a prophet, and a thousand voices are heard repeating, He is a prophet. Others come to enlist themselves, and as all have an equal right, there soon appears formed a body of prophets and prophetesses, composed of the very dregs of the lowest populace. In language worthy of those who use it, they retail the most monstrous conceits, such ravings as the excitement of fever could scarcely engender in the brain of a distempered patient. All that is intelligible is their palpable impiety; but in general they do not understand themselves. Whether we can understand them or not, still they are oracles, who are listened to with religious attention, who are entertained, whose sayings are reported and treasured up like a second Scripture, more respected than the first, which now is merely made use of to clothe their extravagant whims in sacred expressions. The mind once fascinated and carried away, the flesh has no longer any bridle: the filth of impurity mingles with the visions of fanaticism, and comes to be incorporated with its fearful mysteries. And well would it be if they did not soon pass from lust to cruelty, from folly to phrensy; if they did not advance with torch and steel in hand to accomplish the sanguinary predictions of those prophets, who never cease announcing the impending and utter ruin of their adversaries! To such a pitch does this reason degrade and vilify itself, when too proud to bend under the salutary yoke of divine authority. This is an abridgment of the history of the Gnostics, the Montanists, the Priscilianists, the Donatists, the Albigenses, the Hussites, the Anabaptists, the fanatics of Cevennes, &c., &c., &c., and in fine, of all those who, walking in the same paths, shall ever stray into the same wanderings, and shall verify in themselves the expression of the Saviour: ***I am come in the name of the Father, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive.***

alone you do not seek? Think not that I will accuse you to my Father." He who you are forever placing in opposition to me, and of whom you would give people to understand that you are most zealous defenders, this "Moses, in whom you trust, is" *already* "one that accuseth you. For if you did believe Moses, you would perhaps (13) believe me also; for he wrote of me (14). But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

CHAPTER XIV.

A PENITENT SINNER AT THE FEET OF JESUS CHRIST.—THE CORN PLUCKED.

HERE we give a narrative which others place a little further on: they think it occurred at Naim, and we think it was at Bethany, a borough or small town a short distance from Jerusalem. It follows, from the view we take, that the sinner whose conversion we are going to relate is no other than Mary, sister of Lazarus and of Martha. Neither shall we distinguish her from Mary Magdalen, so well known by her tender and inviolable attachment to the sacred person of the Saviour. Many think that these are two, or even three different persons. They ought not to be blamed for maintaining upon this point the opinion which appeared to them most probable; yet it is desirable to know that their proofs fall very short indeed of demonstration. After having examined their reasons, we

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(13) See Note 4, page 64, where this "*perhaps*" is explained.

(14) In the 18th chapter of Deuteronomy we read these words: *The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a prophet of thy nation, and of thy brethren, like unto me.....I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak all that I shall command him. He that will not hear his words which he shall speak in my name, I will be the revenger.*

This prophecy has always been applied to Jesus Christ, and undoubtedly Jesus Christ had it then in view. These words, *like unto me*, signify, 1st. A man, *like unto me*, to allay the apprehensions of the people, who, from fear of dying, had entreated the Lord not to speak personally any more by himself, as he had done upon Mount Sinai. 2d. They also signify a legislator, *like unto me*, to distinguish Jesus Christ from the other prophets, and to prepare men for receiving the new law which was to abrogate the old.

think we may state with confidence that they merely oppose conjecture to conjecture, a new opinion to one more ancient. Now, opinion for opinion, we feel no difficulty in stating that we side more willingly with those which are ancient and common than those which are new and singular. After this short digression, we shall proceed to recount the narrative which occasioned it.

Despite of the declared hostility of the Pharisees to Jesus Christ, there was one of them who ventured to give him marks of attachment and respect. His name was Simon, and it is thought very probable that he is no other than Simon the leper, who is also spoken of in circumstances very like the present. Whether from esteem for Jesus Christ, or from that species of vanity which induces opulent men to invite extraordinary characters to their tables, (*a*) "Simon desired Jesus to eat with him." Jesus consented, and thereby showed that what he hated in the Pharisees was their vices, and not themselves. "He went *therefore* into his house, and sat down to meat. Behold, a woman that was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment; and standing behind at his feet (1), she began to wash his feet with tears, wiped them with the hairs of her head, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee, who had invited him, seeing it, spoke within himself: This man, if he were a prophet, would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him (2), that she is a sinner." He, before whose eyes all things are laid bare, knew well what the Pharisee ventured to think, though not to utter, and by letting him know that he was cog-

(*a*) St. Luke, vii. 36.

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(1) The posture in which it was the custom of those times to recline at table, facilitated to her the means of so doing. They reclined on beds (or couches), the head being turned towards the table and the feet outwards.

(2) To be a prophet, it is not necessary to know every thing by divine revelation; it is enough to know several. Eliseus was not the less a prophet, although he was ignorant of the death of the Sunamite's son, which the Lord, he said, had concealed from him. Thus Jesus Christ might, as man, be ignorant what this woman was, and nevertheless be a prophet. Wherefore the Pharisee was mistaken on this point. We shall see that he also deceived himself on several others. Innumerable are the blunders of malice, which, notwithstanding, thinks itself so subtle and penetrating.

nizant of what was passing within him, should have fully satisfied the Pharisee's mind that he was plainly invested with the quality of prophet. But as he wished to use forbearance towards a man who had invited him to his table, he not only did not address him until he had in some manner asked his permission, but also made use of a parable, which, without too sorely wounding his self-love, yet convinced him of his error, by showing him how blind he was in the judgment he passed upon Jesus Christ, unjust in his strictures on the penitent, and presumptuous in the estimate he formed of himself. "He said to him *then*, answering," not his words, but his thoughts: "Simon, I have something to say to thee: Master, say it, said he. A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. Whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which, therefore, of the two loveth him most? I suppose, said Simon, answering, that he to whom he forgave most. Jesus said to him: Thou hast judged rightly." And turning to the woman, he justified the little attention which he had seemed to pay to what she was doing, by making it apparent that he had remarked every thing, that he gave her credit for all, and that her tears had a more delicious relish for him than all the dainties which the Pharisee had served up before him. "Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she with tears hath washed my feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest me no kiss, but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but she with ointment hath anointed my feet. Wherefore, I say to thee, many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much (3). But

(3) The great love of this sinful woman is given here for the cause of the great remission accorded to her. In the parable remission is granted to her on account of this great love. If you seek for the justice of the application, I am free to avow there is much ado in finding it. Yet that it does not appear impossible, you may form your own judgment by what we are going to say. It seems that there would exist no further difficulty if we admitted a love which was at the same time the cause and the effect of the remission, that is to say, a love that preceded the remission, and which had at the same time the remission for its motive. This is, in point of fact, the love of that penitent. According to the parable she loved much, because many sins were remitted her; and following the application, many sins are remitted her, because she loved much. Now, here is the way in which all this can be explained and recon-

he to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less. And he said to her: Thy sins are forgiven thee."

This was what she exclusively desired; and what constituted the glory of this illustrious penitent is, that she was the first who addressed herself to Jesus Christ to obtain from him, not, like others, deliverance from some corporeal infirmity, but the healing of those mortal wounds which sin had made in her soul. In doing so, her faith which Jesus Christ is going to eulogize seems to have perfectly enlightened her, since she recognized him for her Saviour in the true sense, viz., in the sense that he was (*a*) "to save the people from their sins." Now this is what was less understood than any thing else even among those Jews who acknowledged him to be a prophet. Very far from thinking that he was soon to confer upon sinful men the power of remitting sin, they viewed him with astonishment when he attributed this power to himself. Whence it followed that "they

(*a*) St. Matthew, i. 21.

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ciled. Let us bear in mind these words of the Council of Trent, when it treats of the dispositions for justification: *They* (the sinners) *must begin to love God as the source of all justice*, that is to say, as author of the justification of sinners. This justification is evidently the effect of the merciful bounty by which God remits sins, and this mercy is the attribute under which God is here proposed to the love of the sinner. Wherefore he is bound to love God, because God is sufficiently good to render him just, after being a sinner, and to render him just by mercifully according to him the pardon of all his crimes. Now, the heavier he is loaded with crimes, the greater is this bounty with respect to him, and the more amiable should it appear to him; and I can conceive that if I love God, because I know that he is sufficiently good to grant to my repentance the pardon of all my crimes, I ought to love him a thousand times more, being a thousand times more culpable, than I should love him if I were a thousand times less guilty. I have said that such was the love of this sinful woman; and it is that at the same time that she was the woman to whom many sins were remitted, because she loved much, she also discovers herself to be the debtor, who loves the creditor not for what he has already remitted, but because the debtor believes firmly that the creditor is sufficiently generous to remit him even a heavier debt. In a word, this is gratitude by anticipation, for a grace which is sure to be obtained from the pure bounty of Him who can, and we know will accord it. Let us say, however, that there never is any certainty of having obtained this grace. Yet this uncertainty should be no obstacle to the love of which I speak; because this does not come from God, but from ourselves, that is to say, from our own dispositions, for the validity of which we never can answer. For could I be infallibly assured that they are such as they ought to be, I should no longer be permitted to doubt of my pardon; it would be to me an article of faith, as it was to the penitent, after Jesus Christ had said to her: *Thy sins are forgiven thee.*

that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves," in surprise, mingled with no little indignation: "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" But without stopping to reply to them, "Jesus said to the woman: Thy faith hath made thee safe; go in peace (4)." This faith was evidently that by which she had believed that Jesus Christ had the power and the will to remit her sins; and Jesus, by expressly declaring so, taught this murmuring throng that only by similar faith could they merit and obtain the like grace.

When the feast was over, Jesus, who was under no obligation to prolong his sojourn at Jerusalem, returned back towards Galilee. He arrived there, and was occupied, as usual, in pursuing his evangelical missions. (*a*) "On the second-first (5) Sabbath, as he went through the corn-fields, it came to pass that his disciples being hungry, began to pluck the ears, and rubbing them in their hands, did eat." The law allowed this in express terms (Deut. 23), and the thing, considered in itself, could not incur the slightest reproach from those who piqued themselves on being scrupulous observers. Wherefore it was on account of the particular day that those Pharisees who were spectators of the action took occasion to find fault. (*b*) "Why, said they to the disciples, do you that which is not lawful on the Sabbath days?" and as their animosity was much more inflamed against the Master, "Behold," said they to him, with that bitter zeal

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 1; St. Matthew, xii. 1. (*b*) St. Luke, vi. 2.

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(4) The abuse which Protestants have made of these words to establish their justifying faith, compels us to remember here that Jesus Christ had said previously: *Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much.* It is not, therefore, faith *alone* which justifies, but *faith that worketh by charity.*—Gal. v.

(5) *Second-first*, that is to say, the first Sabbath after the second day of the feast of Azimes. In the 23d chapter of Leviticus we read the following decree: "You shall count, therefore, from the morrow after the Sabbath, wherein you offered the share of the first-fruits, seven full weeks, even unto the morrow after the seventh week be expired, that is to say, fifty days." This day after the seventh week was the day of Pentecost. Now it has been very happily conjectured that all the Sabbath days between the feast of Easter and that of Pentecost were named from this second day of Easter, so that the first Saturday following was termed the first Sabbath after the second day, and, by abbreviation, the second-first, the second-second, &c., that is to say, second Sabbath after the second day, third Sabbath after the second day. Note that the circumstance of the ripe ears of wheat leave no ground for doubting that it was then between Easter and Pentecost.

which rather unmasks than disguises passion, (*a*) "behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath days." "Have you not read, said Jesus, answering them, have you not read what David did when he was hungry himself, and they that were with him? How he entered into the house of God (6) under Abiathar (7), the high priest; took and eat the bread of proposition (8), which it is not lawful for him to eat, nor for them that were with him (9), but for the priests only? Or have you not read in the law, that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple break the Sabbath, and are without blame? But I tell you that there is *here* a greater than *the* temple."

He spoke of himself, and this was one of those expressions which, as it were, escaped him, whereby he discovered his divinity to those who hearkened attentively to his words, and applied themselves to understand them; for who is greater than the temple, if it be not the Lord of the temple? Afterwards he added, to let them know that the motive for the reproach they made him was no other than that zeal which they so pompously paraded: (*b*) "If you knew what this meaneth, I will have mercy (10), and not sacrifice, you would never have condemned the innocent." Jesus Christ had already

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 2, 3; St. Mark, ii. 26; St. Luke, vi. 4; St. Matthew, xii. 4–6.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xii. 7.

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(6) In the first inclosure of the tabernacle, where laymen were allowed to enter. This occurred at Nobe, a sacerdotal town, whither the tabernacle was transported from Silo.

(7) It is written in the 1st book of Kings, chap. xxi., that the high priest from whom David asked the bread was Achimelech, the father of Abiathar. Several answers have been given to this difficulty. The most decisive is, that it is settled by the 2d book of Kings, chap. viii., and by the 1st of Paralipomenon, chap. xviii., that the father and the son had each of them the two names of Achimelech and Abiathar.

(8) So called because the bread was *proposed*, or presented, before the face of the Lord upon a table called, for this reason, *the table of the bread of proposition*. They were piled up, six on each side. The twelve represented the twelve tribes of Israel who protested by this offering that they held from the Lord all their subsistence. They were renewed every Sabbath-day, and those which were taken away could only be eaten by the priest, and that within the inclosure of the tabernacle.

(9) David presented himself alone; but those that were with him were in the vicinity, as we also see in the 21st chap. of the 1st book of Kings.

(10) See the 14th note of the 11th chap., page 86.

quoted this maxim against them in a case similar to this, and thus we see how earnestly he desired that this truth should be deeply engraven on every mind. Finally, to wind up his reply and the lesson which it had furnished him with an occasion of giving, (*a*) "he said to them: The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; therefore, the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath also."

The one follows evidently from the other, since the Son of man being the king and master of all men, hath under his control every thing connected with men, and whatever is made for them, as was the Sabbath. Wherefore, he hath a right to dispense them, and he did so in the present circumstance; for it is ackowledged by all, that the disciples then required a dispensation—not, as we have already said, for taking the ears of corn away from the people's crops, nor even for bruising them between their hands, which was equivalent to breaking bread into pieces before eating, an action which could never require any defence;—but a dispensation was requisite to enable them to gather these ears of corn on the Sabbath-day, which was expressly forbidden, and from this prohibition Jesus Christ dispensed them. Undoubtedly he had a right to do so; and no one was entitled to call him to account for the reasons upon which he grounded the dispensation. Yet he condescended to give them, and, on close examination, we find in them the foundation of a complete apology: 1st. By declaring himself Lord of the Sabbath, he established his sovereign right to dispense with it. 2d. The law was, by its nature, susceptible of dispensation; inasmuch as, being made for man, it was natural it should give way to his real and pressing necessities. 3d. The motive which induced God to use this indulgence is his goodness. He is better pleased that men should break the rest which he commanded them, than allow themselves to be pressed by hunger, so as to run the risk of falling from weakness. Such is the direct meaning of this expression, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," without prejudice to the moral sense which we have affixed to it, and which it likewise had when uttered by Jesus Christ. 4th. The disciples were in a position requiring dispensation for two

(*a*) St. Mark, ii. 27.

reasons: of these, necessity was the first. This had authorized David in an action which, under any other circumstances, would have been deemed a sort of sacrilege; therefore, such necessity must, for a much stronger reason, have authorized the disciples in the seeming violation of a less important law. The second reason is, the sanctity of the functions in which they were employed. This justifies, or rather sanctifies, the working of the priests in the temple, for the preparation and immolation of victims, whence arose the Jewish proverb: There is no Sabbath in the temple. How much the more ought it to justify and sanctify the actions of those who, being attached to the person of Jesus Christ, and having become his co-operators, are occupied in ministrations much more holy than all those of the ancient priesthood! The remark has been made that Jesus Christ justifies his disciples by the example of holy and religious men, yet that, when his object was to justify himself personally, he merely alleges the example of his Father, comparing thus man to man, and a God to a God.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WITHERED HAND RESTORED.—MILDNESS OF JESUS CHRIST FORETOLD.—CALLING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

This complaint was soon renewed. Shortly after the fact we have just related, (*a*) "it came to pass, also on another Sabbath-day, that Jesus entered into the synagogue, and taught. There was a man whose right hand was withered. The Scribes and the Pharisees watched if he would heal on the Sabbath, and they asked Jesus: Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" They spoke thus, "that they might find an accusation against him," or make him contradict himself, if he hesitated at all in his reply. Either that, or they designed to accuse him of gross prevarication, if he advanced what, in their eyes, was a most scandalous maxim, viz., it is lawful

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 6, 7; St. Matthew, xii. 10.

to heal ailments on the Sabbath-day. (*a*) "Jesus, *who* knew their thoughts," disconcerted them in a way which, while it covered them with shame, did but render their hatred more furious, and their resentment more implacable. "He said to the man who had the withered hand: Arise, and stand forth in the midst. And, rising, he stood forth." Then, addressing himself to the Pharisees, "I ask you, if it be lawful on the Sabbath days to do good or to do evil—to save life or to destroy (1)?"—that is to say, not to save life when it is within our power to do so; for between the two extremes of saving and depriving of life by a positive act, there is a medium, which consists in inaction, or doing neither good nor evil. But the proof that Jesus used this expression in the sense which we attach to it, is this, that whereas they might have replied to him, (*b*) "they held their peace." Hence they acknowledged by their silence, that doing good to our neighbor on the Sabbath-day, when this good is of a nature not to be deferred, is not an evil act; and that we should rather be doing an evil to our neighbor, heinous in proportion to this very good, if we omitted the good when in our power. But to make them feel the utter cruelty of their false zeal, Jesus added this comparison, drawn from their own conduct: (*c*) "What man, he said to them, shall there be among you, that hath one sheep, and if the same fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not take hold on it and lift it up (2)? How much better is a man than a sheep?

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 8.
(*b*) St. Mark, iii. 4.
(*c*) St. Matthew, xii. 11, 12; St. Mark, iii. 4; St. Matthew, xii. 13.

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(1) Not to save the life of the soul or that of the body, when in our power so to do, is taking away one or the other. Who is there that will not be alarmed at this? But who can excuse those whom God has charged with the care of souls, or to whom he has given the means of relieving the wants of the body?

(2) What then was permitted is expressly forbidden by the canon law of the Jews, and the Rabbis are become more scrupulous on this point than the Pharisees were in the time of Jesus Christ. They say, notwithstanding, that when an animal falls into a pit on a Sabbath-day, a person in that case can go down into the pit, place something under the animal to raise it, and that, if it then escapes, the Sabbath is not violated. Poor subtlety, which would not hinder the Sabbath from being violated, in point of fact, if the law forbid acting in a circumstance like the present; because to act it evidently is—descending into a pit, carrying thither a stone or piece of stick, and placing it under cattle, which require this aid to get out of the pit. It is well to remark, that with all their scruples, this class of people do not wish, nevertheless, to lose their sheep.

Therefore, it is lawful to do a good deed on the Sabbath days," continues he, in conclusion. He seemed to pause for any answer they might have to make; "but they held their peace," confounded with shame and vexation. "Jesus, looking round about on them with anger, being grieved for the blindness of their hearts (3), saith to the man: Stretch forth thy hand. He stretched it forth, and his hand was restored to health, even as the other."

At the sight of this miracle, "the Pharisees were filled with madness," and assuredly not without reason. Jesus Christ had clearly shown them that it was allowable to cure this man upon the Sabbath-day, in whatever point of view the subject was examined. Still, had he applied his hand, their malignity might have found room to cavil anew; but what could they say when they saw him employ nothing but speech? Was it forbidden to speak upon the Sabbath-day?—or, as to the words allowed to be spoken, must there be an exception against those which worked miracles? They saw that the absurdity would be too glaring did they hazard such objections, and so being forced to hold their peace, they no longer hearkened to any other impulse than that of exasperated and furious passion. (*a*) "Going out, they immediately made a consultation with the Herodians (4), how "they might destroy him" whom they could not confound.

(*b*) "Jesus knowing it"—he, whose power could nullify the efforts of his enemies with the same facility as his wisdom had disconcerted the vain subtleties of their words, wished on this occasion to give his disciples the example of the conduct they should pursue in the persecutions they were to encounter. He appeared to yield before the storm, (*c*) "and retired with them to the sea. A great multitude

(*a*) St. Mark, iii. 6. (*b*) St. Matthew, xii. 15. (*c*) St. Mark, iii. 7.

(3) Sin is injurious to God, whom it offends, and wretched for man, who commits it. Inasmuch as it is an offence towards God, it excites the indignation of Jesus Christ, and the evil it does men causes him grief. This is so, because Jesus Christ loves both God and man. True zeal is that which has its origin in both these affections.

(4) We are ignorant who these Herodians were. They may have constituted a religious sect, or a political party—perhaps both together. Very likely they derived the name of Herodians from their declared attachment to the person of Herod Antipas, then tetrarch of Galilee, or in general for the family of the Herods.

followed him from Galilee and Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan. They about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing the things which he did, came to him. Jesus spoke to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he healed many, so that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had evils. (*a*) He healed them all, and he charged them that they should not make him known. (*b*) The unclean spirits"—that is, the possessed, who were their instruments—" when they saw him, fell down before him, and they cried out, saying: Thou art the Son of God. And he strictly charged them, that they should not make him known (5); that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaias the prophet, saying (6): Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul hath been well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not contend, nor cry out; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. The bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not extinguish, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name the Gentiles shall hope."

Meekness, therefore, is one of the features which designate the Messiah, and he ought to be recognized by this amiable character. Were the Jews, then, mistaken when they figured to themselves a conquering Messiah? No: mistaken they were not, excepting in the mode

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 15, 16. (*b*) St. Mark, iii. 11, 12; St. Matthew, xii. 17–21.

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(5) See note 4 of chapter x., page 73.

(6) To connect this prophecy with what precedes it, it is said that Jesus Christ's intention, in forbidding the publication of his divinity and his miracles, was to deprecate the anger of the Pharisees, who were already but too much exasperated against him. This motive was worthy of the meekness of Jesus Christ, who constitutes the object of this prophecy. Envy should not be so humored as to make us abstain from works of zeal and charity, at which it is unjust to take offence; but we must soften their lustre as much as possible, in order not to increase its pain or augment its torment. There is malignity in insulting its grief, and putting straight before its eye the light which it hates and which fires this passion. If envy is unworthy of being treated with caution, such caution is due to charity, which never allows us to take pleasure in another's pain; this caution is also due to our own safety. Envy, when irritated, is capable of any thing; and how often have its furious paroxysms, not treated with sufficient caution, upset the victor in his chariot, and changed into funereal pomp the exhibition of a triumph indiscreetly displayed!

of his conquests; for a conqueror he was to be, in point of fact. The justice alluded to here is the evangelical law, under which he was to reduce all nations; yet not by force or terror. The means which he is to employ shall be a tone of voice so moderate, that no one shall ever remark in it either the animosity of contention or the brilliancy of dispute. He shall not advance amidst the overthrow and wreck of every obstacle on his passage, crushing all before him; his step shall be so soft, his tread so measured, that he might put his foot upon a bruised reed without breaking it, and on smoking flax without extinguishing the fire: terms of expression which, in the hallowed language of Scripture, signify a meekness not only unalterable, but also infinitely cautious not to shock the weak, and to soothe the infirm. These are the weapons by which he shall triumph over all hearts, and, victorious over all nations, he shall first of all accomplish in his person that magnificent promise which he is just going to make to all the imitators of his incomparable meekness: (*a*) "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land!"

He alone was more than sufficient for the execution of this great project. Yet, for the honor of human nature, with which he had not disdained to unite himself, he wished that men should be his co-operators. Already he had disciples; still up to then they were all nearly equal, and his will was that some of them should hold the first rank amongst their companions, and be, as it were, the fathers and chiefs of the new people whom he was about consolidating on the earth. The moment was come when he was to make this choice of every one of those individuals—a choice of unparalleled importance to the universe, and conferring the utmost glory upon those who had the happiness to be included. Before he commenced this undertaking, (*b*)"he went out into a mountain to pray." We know that such a preparation was not requisite for him; still it was desirable that he should give the example to his Church, which made it incumbent on her to imitate him in this particular, as we see by the fasts and the prayers preceding the choice and consecration of her ministers. (*c*) "When day was come, he called unto him his disciples, and they came to him. He chose twelve of them, whom he would

(*a*) St. Matthew, v. 4.
(*b*) St. Luke. vi. 12.
(*c*) St. Luke, vi. 13; St. Mark, iii. 13, 14.

himself, that should be with him, and that he might send them to preach. He named them apostles [*which signifies sent*], and he gave them the power to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils. (*a*) The names of the twelve apostles are: Simon, whom he surnamed Peter, the first; *then* James, the son of Zebedee, and John, the brother of James; he named them Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, the publican; Thomas, James, the son of Alpheus, and Jude, *his* brother, *named* Thaddeus; Simon, the Cananean, who is called Zelotes, and Judas Iscariot, who was the traitor (7)." This is the reason why he is always placed the last among the apostles. Peter is always named the first, as he was appointed head of the Apostolic College, and first pastor of the Church. James, son of Zebedee, is the same whom we call James the Elder. It is not in the sense in which they themselves seem to have originally understood the expression, that he and his brother were termed sons of thunder; this name was only given to them to signify the lustre and energy of their preaching. James, the son of Alpheus, is known by the name of James the Minor. He also is called in Scripture the brother of the Lord, with whom he, as well as his brother Jude, or Thaddeus, was closely connected. Each of them is the author of a separate canonical Epistle, bearing their respective names. Matthew, who, out of humility, gives himself here the title of Publican, is the same as Levi, the son of another Alpheus, spoken of elsewhere. Some are of opinion that Bartholomew is

(*a*) St. Matthew, x. 2; St. Luke, vi. 14–16; St. Mark, iii. 17, 18.

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(7) Jesus chose Judas because he sincerely wished him to be an apostle. Judas rendered this choice woeful to himself by his treachery. This did not hinder the Saviour from choosing him, because he was to serve to teach us that the gifts from God of the highest excellence always leave the man who has been endowed with them the power of using or abusing them at his option. Called by the divine vocation to the holiest of states, man may still be lost there; and he should there work out his salvation with fear and with trembling. This treachery serves to teach us further, that as Judas, when he preached by virtue of the mission he had received from Jesus Christ, should not have been less listened to than Saint Peter, so we must, therefore, ever respect in pastors the divine mission, which they do not lose by their personal unworthiness; and, lastly, we must know how to distinguish, on occasion, the individual from the body corporate, and the minister from the ministry, if we do not wish to be reduced to say that the apostles were a society of traitors, and the apostleship the school of treachery.

not different from Nathaniel, one of the first disciples in the order of vocation. If we find some relations of the Saviour among the apostles, we must not think that he chose them from motives of flesh and blood. Kindred furnishes no ground for elevating our connections to ecclesiastical dignities; yet neither does it furnish a reason for excluding them. Besides, a vocation to the apostleship was then a destiny of labor, persecution, and martyrdom. If those who dispose of church patronage employ their relatives in the like ministries, they would rather be liable to the reproach of having sacrificed than of having enriched or elevated their family.

Jesus was solicitous to make this choice in some quiet, remote place, and for that purpose had retired to the mountain. When this reason no longer detained him, he yielded to the desires and wants of the people who were expecting him. (*a*) "Coming down with them, he stood in a plain; and the company of his disciples, and a very great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and the sea-coast both of Tyre and Sidon, who were come to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases. They that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed; and all the multitude sought to touch him, for virtue went out from him, and healed all."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

After having cured bodily evils, he thought this was a fitting time to work out the salvation and perfection of souls. (*b*) "Seeing" *then* "the multitudes," who were come to hear him, and who were disposed by his benefits to listen to him, and to hear him with fruit, "he went up [*the second time*] a mountain to an eminence," from which he could be seen and heard in the plain; "and when he was set down, his disciples came unto him." Then "lifting up his eyes on his disciples, he said, and taught them," by the ensuing discourse, which he seems to have only addressed, at least in great part, to

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 17–19. (*b*) St. Matthew, v. 1, 2; St. Luke, vi. 20.

them alone, but which he pronounced in a tone of voice sufficiently elevated to be heard by all the people, as we may easily judge by the admiration which the sublime doctrine of this divine legislator caused among the multitude.

He begins by laying down the foundation of true happiness, and he annihilates at one stroke all the ideas which had been formed on this point, not only by the passions, but by philosophy, which was merely the art of gratifying them more methodically after covering them with a false gloss of reason, and by Judaism itself, which, taking it all in all, for the exceptions might be counted, imagined no other happiness than what is found in the enjoyment of the goods, the honors, and pleasures of the earth. (*a*) "Blessed," said he, "are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice; for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart; for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake. Be glad, and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets that were before you (1)."

(*a*) St. Matthew, v. 3–12.

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(1) Whole volumes would scarcely suffice to develop the morality comprised in these eight beatitudes. We shall confine ourselves here to pointing out the sense which appears to us the most literal. The poor in spirit are by excellence those who have voluntarily stripped themselves of all their goods to follow Jesus Christ. Those, therefore, whose hearts are detached from worldly goods, whether they do or do not possess them, participate also in this beatitude, but in an inferior degree, and proportionably to their merit. We shall make use of the term *patient*, because our language has not a more proper term, to convey who those *meek* are to whom is promised the true land of the living. Those who mourn and who shall be comforted are they who suffer with resignation the afflictions which God sends them. The heartfelt love of virtue is expressed by the hunger and thirst after justice. To this noble passion is promised perfect satiety, which can never be found in fleeting goods, that only sharpen the hunger and irritate the thirst of their unhappy votaries. The word merciful extends here to every species of mercy,

Since it is finally laid down that what men regarded as evils are the only true good, the conclusion was plain, that what they called good things are the evils most to be dreaded. Yet lest this sequel should escape inattention, or be evaded by subtlety, Jesus draws the conclusion formally, and after having beatified the first, he hurls this tremendous anathema against the second: (*a*) "Woe to you that are rich; for you have your consolation *in this world.* Woe to you that are filled; for you shall hunger. Woe to you that now laugh; for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when men shall bless you; for according to these things did their fathers to the false prophets."

These prophets, true and false, being cited at the close of the blessings and maledictions, are proof that Jesus addressed his words directly to his apostles. What follows sets this in an equally clear light; for although applicable within certain limits to all Christians, still it does not bear its full meaning, except with reference to the apostles and their successors. (*b*) "You are," saith he to them, "the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted (2)? It is good for nothing any more, but to be cast out

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 24–26. (*b*) St. Matthew, v. 13–16.

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both spiritual and corporal. We do not see God with the eyes of the body, says Saint Augustine, but with the eyes of the heart: wherefore those who have pure eyes have nothing to hinder them from seeing his ineffable beauties unveiled. Those are called peace-makers who strive to re-establish and preserve peace amongst men. This great feature of resemblance to the God of Peace will merit for them, in a very excellent manner, the title of children of God. The kingdom of heaven, adjudged in the first place to the voluntary poor, is also adjudged to those who suffer persecution for justice: the first class receive it by right of exchange—the latter by right of conquest. The first are those prudent traders, who sell all to purchase it: the second are those violent invaders, who grasp it by force, and carry it at the point of the sword. It is not the less insured to all the others. For the recompense proposed to them is always the kingdom of God, under different names, which correspond with the different merits to which it is promised. These expressions are also understood to refer to the temporal rewards of virtue, and this sense should not be excluded from them; but it must only be admitted as secondary. To advance it as the first and most literal, would be putting too visibly the accessory in place of the principal.

(2) Salt does not lose its savor; but if it should lose its savor, with what can we salt, or what is there in nature which can be as salt to salt itself? This is what Jesus Christ wishes to say here. Thus the doctor, if he deceives himself, shall not be set right by another doctor; the pastor, if he wanders, shall not be brought back by another pastor;

and to be trodden on by men (3). You are the light of the world;" destined to enlighten it; you cannot escape its observation. "A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid: neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

But in order that they may be this mysterious salt, which imparts to the earth, that is to say, to the men who inhabit it, the relish of virtue, and, after having imparted, preserves this relish; that they may become the light of the world, and that city seated on a mountain, which rivets the traveller's eye, and prevents him from wandering from his path; that they may be the light put upon the candlestick, that it may shine to all those who compose the house of the great father of the family; in short, that they may be, by the lustre of their preaching, and the example of their holiness, the reformers of the world, and worthy ministers of the heavenly Father, to whom those who witness their virtues and successes shall refer all the glory thereof—they must teach all salutary truths, and be faithful to all duties, without distinction of little or great, of what is important or unimportant. But that they may have in his person the most perfect model of such rare perfection, Jesus thus proceeds: "Do not think that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil (4). For, amen, I say unto you: Till

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and the apostle, if he becomes perverted, shall not be converted by another apostle. Not that the thing is absolutely impossible; but it occurs so rarely, that we reckon it an exception, which does not hinder the truth of the general proposition.

(3) *To be trodden on by men,* an expression of the *lowest* contempt, but which is not too strong to express that into which those ministers of the altar inevitably fall who dishonor their ministry by a publicly licentious life.

(4) The Jews have reproached the Christians with this saying of Jesus Christ, as a falsehood in the mouth of him who said that he was sent to establish a new law on the ruins of the old. A more false reproach was never made, nor a more unfounded accusation. 1st. Jesus Christ has kept the law, if we consider it under the aspect of the moral and ceremonious precepts. As to what regards the first, he was always perfectly irreprehensible; and in order to confound his enemies, he had only to defy them to reproach him with a single sin. As to the ceremonious precepts, although in no way bound to observe them, he has not, nevertheless, disdained to fulfil them. He wished to be circumcised; for, although he was circumcised in his mere infancy, he was the only child of whom

heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass of the law, till all is fulfilled. He, therefore, that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven (5). But he that shall do, and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, that unless your justice abound more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

This conclusion shows clearly enough that these commandments which Jesus Christ denominates "least," were not so in their own nature, but only in the judgment of the Scribes and Pharisees. These men were never accused of despising what are termed "little" things: we know, on the contrary, that they relinquished important duties to wed themselves scrupulously to minute observances. This drew upon them from Jesus Christ this grave rebuke, inculcating

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it was true to say that he was only circumcised because he wished to be so. I say as much of his presentation in the temple. Arrived at a mature age, he went to Jerusalem at the great festivals; he celebrated the Passover; and as to the Sabbath, concerning which he encountered such great reproaches, he never objected to its obligation, but only to the false or finical additions of the Pharisees. 2d. If we consider the ancient law as the sketch of the new, not only did Jesus Christ accomplish it by realizing the things it shadowed forth, and verifying its prophecies, but it could only receive its accomplishment from him alone: without him it should have eternally remained imperfect; and, if we wish to speak exactly, we should say that he rather perfected than abrogated it, as the colors which cover the lines of a drawing do not efface the design, but set it off to perfection, by imparting the requisite animation to the figures of the body.

(5) According to the common interpretation, these words signify that he shall be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. According to some, they mean to say that he shall have the last place. What follows is in favor of the first interpretation. Those who prefer the second, ground themselves on the fact that small precepts alone are spoken of, that is to say, according to them, such as do not oblige to the extent of mortal sin. We shall see whether or not they are mistaken in this. But supposing that in point of fact they are not mistaken, if then it be true that we may violate these small precepts without being thereupon excluded from the kingdom of heaven, can any one venture to say that we should not be excluded therefrom if we taught others to violate them—above all, if a person had the influence and character to teach? Teaching people to contemn the will of God, which is not the less declared, and, in one sense, is not the less entitled to respect in small things as in great; encouraging men to emancipate themselves from their primary duties, by affording them facility in so doing in those which are regarded as of lesser importance; stripping virtue of all her outworks, and, like a stronghold, whose external works are all demolished, exposing it to be carried by the first assault of vice; could the pastor, the preacher, the director who should have caused so great an evil, have still a right to claim even the last place in the heavenly kingdom?

that the latter should not be omitted, but that we must commence by fulfilling the first. The error, or rather the depravity, which here seems to be the cause of the reproach cast upon them, is, their regarding as a trifling matter the inward accomplishment of great commandments or precepts, condemning only the outward act. So as they abstained from this, they deemed themselves just, and reckoned as naught a thousand criminal desires, to which they abandoned themselves without scruple. Insufficient justice! which at most was merely a mask, since it did not dwell in the heart, which is the only seat of true justice, man being never innocent when his heart is guilty, as he never can be guilty when his heart is innocent. What gives also to this explanation a new degree of probability, are the following words of the Saviour, which are going to disclose to us the malice of murder in a word uttered from the lips, and the iniquity of adultery even in a desire of the heart.

"You have heard that it was said of old: Thou shalt not kill; and whoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of judgment (6): whoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall

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(6) Amongst the Jews there were two different tribunals, denominated the *judgment:* one was only composed of three judges, and the other of twenty-three. The council spoken of here was the Sanhedrim, the great senate of the nation, composed of seventy-two judges. Causes were brought before these different tribunals, according to the importance of the matter or the quality of the crime. The Jews had also three capital punishments—the sword, lapidation, and fire, the most rigorous of all. The words of the Saviour allude to all these things without prejudice to the literal sense of the pain of fire, which should be understood with reference to the fire of the other life.

Since it is with reference to murder that Jesus Christ speaks in this way, it is natural to suppose that, in order to deserve these severe judgments, anger must be accompanied by ill-will. The word Raca, also, which, according to the greater number of interpreters, is merely a vague expression of contempt, or which signifies at most a giddy person, according to those who give a definite meaning to the word—this word, I say, must be pronounced in a tone and in circumstances which make it an injury; and the tone and circumstances must also make the word fool, or any other equivalent thereto, an outrage. This does not always occur, and, therefore, these faults are not always capital sins; but this criminal character occurs often enough to furnish just grounds of terror to those who, when in anger, do not know how to moderate their resentment or temper their speech. We ought not to except certain phlegmatic sallies of anger, less violent in appearance and less outrageous in language. Here the language is nothing—all depends on the thing they signify; and, in despite of his affected moderation and his smooth ex-

be in danger of the council; and whoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Still there are means of avoiding this chastisement. But these means, to which it hath pleased God to attach the forgiveness of sin, are of indispensable obligation and a necessity so urgent, that there is no duty, no matter of what nature, but should yield to this. "If, therefore, thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath any thing against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming, thou shalt offer thy gift. Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence, till thou repay the last farthing."

This sort of parable is not very difficult to explain. The party to it is the person offended. The "agreement" referred to is the just reparation of the offence; "the way" is the time of life; God is "the judge;" "the officers" are the spirits executing his vengeance; and hell or purgatory is the "prison" wherein, according to the quality of the debt, the debtor shall be inclosed, never to be enlarged from the first species of confinement, where the prisoner remains always insolvent, the crime which made him fall therein being always mortal; or, if the guilt be only venial, not to be enlarged from the second species of confinement until after he has paid, according to the very rigor of justice, all the penalty he had deserved to undergo. For it doth not suffice, when we have offended our brother, to ask God's pardon for the offence; we must also satisfy the injured party.

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pressions, the polished man who gives any one to understand that he regards him as a fool and a blockhead, shall be condemned to the punishment of fire.

If you object that there will, therefore, be many men condemned to the punishment of fire, considering the great number of those with whom such modes of speaking are habitual and ordinary, it is easily answered, that in the judgment of God the multitude will not save the guilty; that the habit, very far from justifying the sinner, renders him more criminal, and that the same rule applies to this case as to that of judging our neighbor; that lastly, since the oracle hath spoken, there is no further question of considering the matter, but of correcting one's self.

Without this preliminary there can be no remission. If this obligation were unknown to the Jews, it seems to be forgotten by Christians; but, forgotten or unknown, it is not the less real, and the law which prescribed it is too plain to leave the smallest doubt on the subject. Whoever refuses to submit himself to it should expect to undergo one of those terrible judgments which have just been pronounced; and, even in this life, he should regard himself as excluded from the altar, and, in some measure, excommunicated by this sentence, coming from the mouth of the God of Justice and of Peace, who still repeats to him from the recess of the tabernacle wherein he invisibly resides: "Go first to be reconciled to thy brother."

The new legislator goes on to speak of adultery very nearly in the same way he did of murder, that is to say, he discloses it where men had not even suspected it to be. "You have heard," [*saith he also to them,*] "that it was said of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say to you, that whoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery in his heart."

Desire follows so close after sight, and sight appears so inevitable to any one having eyes, that we are tempted to ask then, Must they be plucked out? Yes, said the Saviour, who, very far from endeavoring to elude, is the first to draw this consequence: "If thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than thy whole body be cast into hell; and if thy right hand scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body go into hell."

The healing art does so every day, that is to say, sacrifices a fes tered member for the preservation of the entire body, and these figures of speech are obviously drawn from this art. Yet we must not take them exactly to the letter. True, it is better to lose the eye and the hand, than the whole body and soul, and that if salvation depended on the like separation, we should endure it com ing from another; but it is not allowable to perform it on our selves, and the Church has ever condemned those who, deceived by the literal sense, have made attempts against their own lives, or the members of their bodies. Reduced to their true meaning, these

words signify that we are obliged to separate ourselves from every thing which is a near occasion of sin, were it a thing so dear and so precious as may be the right eye and the right hand, and were the separation equally as painful. Here all tampering is mortal. Flight or hell, separation or hell. Between these two things Jesus Christ places no medium. At the sight of this fearful alternative, let every attachment be broken, every repugnance surmounted, every interest sacrificed; let the sophistry of the passions disappear before the flash of this lightning, and be silent at the crash of this thunder. Yet, Jesus does not stop here; and, after having pointed out adultery in desire, he shows it again in a sort of union tolerated up to that period: it was that which was formed after a marriage broken, not by the death of one of the united parties, but by the divorce permitted by the old law, which was finally and irrevocably abolished by the author of the evangelical law, who thus brought back marriage to the purity of its original. He thus expresses himself: "It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorce (7). But I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, excepting for the cause of fornication (8), maketh

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(7) We shall have occasion further on to speak of the law of divorce. We shall only here remark the tenor of the act, and the formalities observed therein by the Jews. 1st. It could not be granted, except with the permission of the husband. 2d. The husband should transfer the deed to the woman with his own hand. 3d. There should not be less than two witnesses, and all the witnesses should affix their seal to the instrument. 4th. The recital set forth three degrees of generation of the man and three of the woman. 5th. The paper on which it was engrossed should be of a greater length than breadth, the letters should be written in a round hand, and separated from one another; there should be no erasure; and, if a drop of ink fell upon the paper, it would make the act a nullity. We recognize in these minutiæ the scruples of the Jews, who often made no scruple in repudiating a woman from fancy or for trifles. The husband said to the woman, when giving the deed: *Receive the act of divorce: be separated from me, and let any one be allowed to marry thee.* This deed was couched in these terms:—I, Rabbi N., son of Rabbi N., son of Rabbi N., such a day of such a month of such a year from the creation of the world, being in such a place, of my own full and free determination, and without being constrained to it, have repudiated N., daughter of Rabbi N., son of Rabbi N., son of Rabbi N., and I have placed in her hands the deed of divorce, the schedule of separation, and the testimony of division, that she may be separated from me, and that she may go wheresoever it pleaseth her, without any one offering her any opposition, conformably to the constitution of Moses and of the people of Israel.

(8) Several other reasons might authorize married people to separate; but Jesus

her to commit adultery, and he that shall marry her that is put away," for whatever cause it may be, "committeth adultery." Undoubtedly the man who marries again, after having put away his wife, also commits adultery, and the woman who consents to marry him sins in like manner; for what is said of one is equally understood of the other, although not formally announced. In the same way, when Jesus Christ said that the man who looks at a woman with eyes of desire hath committed adultery in his heart, this is understood to mean, that by casting on a man similar glances, a woman renders herself guilty of the same crime.

The depravity of man coerced him to place first in the order of reform these two precepts, which form the fifth and sixth of the Decalogue. Having brought them to such high perfection, the Lord comes to that which, in the order of the commandments, is second. He likewise strips this of the false glosses put upon it by the Pharisees, and he makes additions to it hitherto unknown to the Jews. "Again, you have heard," added he, "that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but thou shalt perform thy oaths to the Lord (9). But I say to you, not to swear at

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Christ only speaks of adultery. 1st. Because he only treats here directly of the dismissal of the woman by the husband, and that it was very rare that other legitimate reasons arose on the woman's side. 2d. Because the other causes of separation do not proceed from the very nature of marriage, like that of adultery, which openly violates the contract. We are not unaware that violence carried to a certain excess, that danger of perversion, which perversion appears inevitable, are reasons for married people to separate; but this is only by virtue of the natural right which all have to provide by flight or by separation for their life's safety, or for the salvation of their soul. 3d. The separation which has adultery for its cause is perpetual in its nature, which those separations are not which arise from any other cause. In the latter cases, when the culpable party acknowledges his delinquency, and that he corrects himself of it, the wife is bound to come back, and to live with him; but no one is bound to do so in the case of adultery. Supposing he repents, and is converted, he may be received into favor, or refused admittance; the parties may be reunited, or remain irrevocably separated. In Christianity this right does not the less belong to the woman than to the man: I say in Christianity, which, of all religions, is the most favorable to women, by re-establishing them in their legitimate rights, elsewhere overlooked through the injustice, or usurped by the violence of men.

(9) This regards more particularly the vow, which is only a species of oath; but taking occasion from this, Jesus Christ gives precepts regarding all sorts of oaths, of what nature soever they may be.

all; neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is his foot-stool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King (10). Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black; but let your speech be yea, yea; no, no; and that which is over and above these is evil."

All the antecedent part is of strict obligation; what follows is not equally so. Among the precepts there are to be found counsels which are not rigorously binding, at least as to external practice; for, regarding the interior disposition, there exists no one who is not, to a certain extent, bound, and whoever should refuse to adopt their spirit, would not have the spirit of the Gospel. Such is what Jesus Christ here opposes to the ancient *lex talionis*, which he abolishes,

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(10) That is to say, in *no manner*, and not in *no circumstance*, whatever the followers of Wickliffe and the Anabaptists may have thought, following the example of some ancient obscure heretics, who concluded, from these expressions, that swearing is never allowable. The sequel shows clearly enough that Jesus Christ had only in view to proscribe that series of oaths of all sorts which the Jews had perpetually in their mouths. It has, therefore, been always permitted to take God for witness of a thing that is true, when necessity or great utility obliges it to be done, and that it is done respectfully, and in suitable circumstances. Such has been, at all times, the practice of the Church, authorized by the great example of Saint Paul, who takes God as a witness of the great things which he writes; and of the Angel of the Apocalypse, who, after raising his hand, swears by Him who lives from age to age. But, beyond these cases which we have just excepted, all swearing is forbidden, and we should confine ourselves simply to affirmation or to negation. If this is not an addition which Jesus Christ makes to the second precept, it is, at least, the explanation of a second sense, which the Jews did not perceive in these words: Thou shalt not swear *in vain*. They only understood the words with reference to the prohibition of swearing contrary to truth; Jesus Christ discloses to them the further sense of swearing without reason.

Another addition to this precept is the prohibition, which Jesus Christ subjoins, of not swearing by any thing whatsoever. The Jews imagined themselves irreprehensible when they swore by any thing else than by the name of God. Jesus Christ teaches them, that to swear by creatures is swearing by the Creator, and that to swear by one's self or by one's head (a species of oath very much in use among the Greeks and Romans, whence, apparently, it had passed to the Jews), was also sinful, but for a different reason. To swear by the head, is to offer it up as a sacrifice, supposing a person swears falsely, and to sacrifice it is disposing of what properly belongs to God, as if it were our own property. For can a person be the owner of his head, if he cannot change the color of a single hair thereof?

Every oath beyond those which we have excepted, is always a sin; this follows evidently from the prohibition of Jesus Christ, and the reasons upon which he grounds it.

as incompatible with the meekness of the new law. "You have heard that it hath been said: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (11). But I say to you, not to resist evil; but if one strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other. If a man will contend with thee in judgment, and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also to him; and whosoever will force thee one mile (12), go with him other two."

Behold the new *lex talionis*, which the Lamb of God substitutes for the ancient. That of the law gave back injury for injury; that

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(11) We read this law in the twenty-first chapter of Exodus. It did not give private persons the right of taking justice into their own hands; it merely prescribed to judges the measure of punishment which they should dispense to those who had used violence. The Jews were not allowed to insist on this punishment through a spirit of vengeance, as appears by the passage of Leviticus, chapter xix: *Seek not revenge, nor be mindful of the injury of thy citizens.* In Christianity, it is not forbidden to denounce the guilty, and to demand in justice the reparation of the injury, provided it be done through some other motive than that of resentment and vengeance. Here, then, we see no difference between the two laws; and there remains still to be known what Jesus Christ can have in view, as he evidently appears to abrogate something of the ancient and substitute for it something new. In two words, he reforms the abuse of the ancient law, and he establishes the perfection of the new. The abuse of the ancient law consisted in doing, through a spirit of vengeance, what was only allowed to be done through some other innocent motive. I say that this was done without any scruple, and, far from viewing this vengeance as criminal, we have grounds for suspecting that the Pharisees made it a duty and an obligation. The perfection of the new law consists not merely in not seeking for reparation through a motive of vengeance; it requires further, when there exists another reason for seeking it, to make charity supersede this reason—to prefer that injury should remain unpunished, sooner than see it punished by the suffering of the guilty party, even although in consequence of this impunity an individual should be exposed to fresh injuries. We are not always rigorously bound to take this course; but we are bound to mingle no resentment with the reason which makes us seek reparation. It is so difficult to attain this precision, that timerous souls, who despair of reaching it, rather prefer to relinquish the attempt, than to encounter the risk of so hazardous a pursuit, and of a victory, which perhaps would only save their honor at the expense of their conscience. For what man is sufficiently master of his heart, to answer for his not relishing with delight the always criminal pleasure of seeing at his feet an enemy humbled and confounded?

(12) In Latin, *angariaverit*. This word comes from the Persian *angar*, which passed into the Greek and Latin tongues, and even into the French, in which tongue it is used in the familiar style. Its ordinary signification is, *public courier*. These couriers were entitled to dismount all those whom they met, and oblige them to accompany them to the next stage. The species of violence which they used is expressed by the verb *angariare*. This usage still exists amongst many of the Eastern nations.

of the Gospel suffered it twice over rather than once avenge. Such is the disposition of heart to which these words of the Saviour oblige us, and not to present the left cheek to him who strikes the right. Those who insist that there are cases wherein we are bound by the letter, are reduced to fancy some which we may almost call chimerical. Some saints have done so to the edification of the whole Church; but not through obligation, since, in like circumstances, Saint Paul, and even Jesus Christ, have not done so. We may add, that it is more proper not to do so, when we foresee that by so doing we should merely redouble the audacity of aggression and encourage a new crime. The same reasoning must be pursued with reference to the treatment of a man who would wish to rob us unjustly or exact painful services from us to which he is not entitled. By yielding to him what he would deprive us of, or by acquiescing in his exactions, we are not bound to offer him double value; but we should do so, if necessary, rather than oppose violence to violence. Wherefore, it is this meekness, which resisteth nothing—this unalterable patience, ever superior to all injuries and all injustice—which is here commanded us by Jesus Christ. To a morality so sublime, this God of charity and peace joins these short maxims, the practice of which, if they were observed, would banish from society many crimes and many miseries: (*a*) "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow from thee turn not away; of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again; forgive, and you shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given to you (13). Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom. It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive (14). And as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner."

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 30, 37, 38; Acts, xx. 35; St. Luke, vi. 31; St. Matthew, vii. 12.

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(13) Should any one object, that if this counsel were followed, the world would be inundated with robbers, it is easy to answer, that each of us is only responsible for himself alone, and not for the rest of the world. Be meek and patient, without being apprehensive of ever exceeding in these virtues; and, supposing that any inconvenience may result therefrom, let us leave to God and to the civil authorities under him to regulate such matters.

(14) In the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, Saint Paul says: *You*

Nature had known nothing so pure, and philosophy had not even imagined any thing so noble as these doctrines. But it is useless to know them unless we put them in practice; and to do so, we must have the principle in our hearts. This principle is, the love of all men, without excepting those whom reason, when left to itself, represents to us as the most detestable—that is to say, without excepting our most cruel enemies. Whosoever loves these may assure himself that he accomplishes the great precept of universal charity; but he who hates them dwells in death, because charity is incompatible with the hatred of a single man, were he the most odious and the most wicked of all men: a truth heretofore openly resisted by the human heart, which, after an offence, found nothing so reasonable as hatred, or so just as vengeance. New lights are about to produce new feelings. The disagreeable man can be loved, and he should be loved. Here is the precept uttered from His lips who can teach no unreasonable doctrine, since he is the supreme and eternal reason; and he would no longer be justice and goodness itself, if he were capable of commanding impossibilities.

(*a*) "You have heard that it has been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy (15). But I say to you: Love your

(*a*) St. Matthew, v. 43; St. Luke, vi. 28, 32–35.

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ought to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said: It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive. These expressions are not to be met with in any of the four evangelists. Saint Paul had learned it from the apostles, or from one of the disciples who had seen the Lord. There is no doubt that these preserved the recollection of several other expressions of their divine Master, which are not written. As this is written, we deemed it our duty to treasure it, and to put it in this place where the Saviour makes such magnificent promises to liberality, which serve to prove the truth of the maxim in the sense that it is more advantageous to give than to receive.

It is also true in the sense that there is greater pleasure in giving than in receiving. Generous souls find no difficulty in subscribing to this truth, of which they have experience in their own sensations. Interested persons, who do not feel it, cannot comprehend it; the latter should believe it as they believe mysteries.

(15) In the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus, verse 18, we read these words: *Thou shalt love thy friend as thyself.* These words, *Thou shalt hate thy enemy,* we read in no part of Scripture, unless we wish to find this meaning in the order which God issued to his people, to exterminate the unfaithful nations, whose country his people were to occupy; but even this construction would not be a just one. The order to exterminate does not command hatred; and that which is given to soldiers, to kill the enemies of the

enemies (16); do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you; pray for them that persecute and calumniate you; that you may be the children of your Father that is in heaven (17), who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust. For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have (18)? Do not even the publicans these things? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathens this? If you do good to them who do good to you, what thanks are to you? for sinners also do this. And if you lend to them of whom you hope to receive, what thanks ar to you? for sinners also lend to sinners for to receive as much. But love ye your enemies; do good; lend, hoping for nothing thereby;

State, is not an order to hate them. But even if the order of God had been such, Jesus Christ revoked it, as he came to do away with the distinction between Jew and Gentile, and to unite all people in the bonds of the same faith and the same charity. But this is not the interpretation which the Saviour here contends against. It appears that from these words, *Thou shalt love thy friend*, the Jews had concluded, by a contrary analogy, that if they were not obliged, they were, at least, authorized, to hate their enemies. They understood the word enemy in the sense opposed to friend—that is to say, in the sense of private enemy. The description which Jesus Christ gives of it leaves no doubt as to their meaning of the word. It is, according to him, the enemy, who hates us—who persecutes us—who curses us, and calumniates us—all of which things are understood more naturally with reference to a particular enemy than to the public enemy.

(16) The heart of man is impenetrable to himself, and it is very difficult, especially in the struggles of resentment against charity, to discover its depth, and to decide what is its predominant disposition. *Love*, says Jesus Christ; but how can I assure myself that I love him whom I am tempted one thousand times a day to hate mortally? Listen to what the Saviour adds: Do good to him, pray for him, bless him—that is to say, speak well of him. Then you have the greatest assurance which a Christian heart can have, that you have preserved charity. On the contrary, if you speak ill of him—if you seek to injure or to thwart him—if you refuse *to salute him*, that is to say, if you refuse what you owe to his rank and to the different relations which you may have with him, of citizen, neighbor, relative—your state is decided; you do not love, or rather there is proof that you hate: and if still you say, *As a Christian*, I love him, the expression is well understood, and, in modern acceptation, signifies something worse than indifference.

(17) In order that, by this great feature of resemblance, you may be recognized for the children of your heavenly Father. When you see a man who loves his enemy, say boldly, Here is a child of God. No one can be mistaken here.

(18) There is merit in loving our friend when we also love our enemy; but when we do not love our enemy, there is no longer any merit in loving our friend. For in such a case the latter is only through feeling or interest. For if charity had any part in it, charity would make us also love our enemy.

and your reward shall be great. And you shall be the sons of the Highest, for he is kind to the unthankful and the evil. Be ye, therefore, merciful and perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."

Such is the perfection to which we are called; not that we may equal it—for who is as perfect as God?—but that we may labor to acquire it, and to go on evermore in the path that leads to it, for the very reason that we never can equal this perfection. In short, we must either resemble our heavenly Father, or we shall resemble publicans and Pagans. Here there is no medium, inasmuch as there is none between love and hatred. We can never be indifferent with regard to our enemy, whom we are sure to hate from resentment, if we do not love him from religion.

But, after having taught us to do good, Jesus Christ goes on to teach us how to do it well. Prayer, alms, and fasting are works so excellent, that all virtues are comprised in them, or refer to them. Yet nothing is sound for a diseased heart. Such was that of the Pharisees, with whom every virtue was turned into vice, because of the motive that made them exhibit these virtues. They forgot God, and thought wholly of pleasing men. To shun the eye of man, and to think wholly of pleasing God, is the great maxim which the Saviour opposes to their hypocrisy, and, at the same time, the salutary instruction which he gives to his true disciples in the following words:

(*a*) "Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them (19); otherwise you shall not have a reward of your

(*a*) St. Matthew, vi. 1–6.

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(19) This maxim does not abrogate that which we have read at the commencement of the Saviour's discourse: *So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.* It is not always a crime—it is sometimes even a duty to do good before men, even with a design of their seeing it; all depends upon the intention. To wish to be seen when we do good—I say to wish it *solely* to the end that God may be thereby glorified, is always a virtue, and, as we have said, sometimes an obligation. In general, we must make public what is a matter of duty, and keep secret what is a matter of superorogation. Neither of the two rules, however, is without exception. When we are in doubt whether the good work should be shown or concealed, the second course is always the surest; it is so easy to lose one's self through vanity, and so difficult, not to say impossible, to sin through humility.

Humility and charity sometimes exceed bounds, or seem to exceed; but they never sin.

Father who is in heaven. Therefore, when thou doest an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee (20), as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward (21). But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth (22), that thy alms may be in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee. When ye pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites (23), that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and, having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee (24)."

This naturally led Jesus Christ to correct another error on prayer—that of making the merit thereof consist in the multitude, and,

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(20) This is, perhaps, a figurative expression, to signify the ostentation with which the Pharisees dispensed their alms. Perhaps there was also among them the custom of really having a trumpet sounded, to assemble the poor with more show and noise.

(21) Vain like themselves, since they are vain men. But, however, it is *theirs*, such as they had in view, and as they desired. They have received it, and they are paid; God owes them nothing further. To speak with more precision, he owes them the chastisement of their criminal vanity, and he owes it to himself to avenge the injury which they have done him, by preferring the glory that comes from men to that which comes from God.

(22) This is an hyperbole, which conveys the idea that we ought to conceal our alms from the rest of men, and, if it be possible, even from ourselves, by forgetting them, or setting little value upon them. Nothing is so great as to do great things, and to esteem them little. There is a measure of alms which each person is bound to perform, according to his means; these alms ought not to be unknown to the world. For, otherwise, those would be scandalized who might have grounds for believing that you failed to perform the precept. Secrecy refers only to supererogation.

(23) They prayed standing up, to be seen by a greater number of people. The words of the text in Latin, *stantes orare*, may also signify stop, *stopping to pray*, which leaves the posture undecided. This second construction would make the hypocrisy consist in seeking out public places, and saying long prayers there, with a view of being seen and praised by men.

(24) This is said without prejudice to public prayer, recommended and practised at all times. Trifling distractions do not hinder it from being the better course for the heads of families to pray in the midst of their children and their servants than in the secrecy of their private apartments. I speak here of morning and evening prayer. If they wish to pray at other hours, let them apply to these prayers the lesson which the Saviour here gives us.

perhaps, in the elegance, of the words. This is to treat God as we would men, who suffer themselves to be dazzled by the pomp of diction, and persuaded by the force of eloquence. Very probably the Jews were not exempt from this defect. Yet Jesus Christ only attributes it here to the Gentiles. But, as his Church was to form a union of the two people, it was proper that the Gentiles, who were to compose the greater part of it, should also have that instruction which was necessary for them. He proceeds, therefore, thus:

(*a*) "When you are praying, speak not much, as the heathens; for they think that in their much speaking they may be heard (25). Be not you, therefore, like to them. Your Father knoweth what is needful for you before you ask him. Thus, therefore, shall you pray: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen (26)."

(*a*) St. Matthew, vi. 7–13; St. Luke, xi. 3.

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(25) That which renders long discourses unnecessary, or a great display of our miseries, is the knowledge which God has of them. Our sentiment thereof must be lively, and accompanied with an ardent desire to be delivered from them. This does not require many words.

(26) Can God, says Saint Cyprian, not hear this prayer, in which he recognizes the very words of his Son? Tertullian calls it the abridgment of the Gospel. It is in reality, for those who meditate upon it, an inexhaustible source of light and instruction. We shall confine ourselves to giving the sense of it which appears the most literal.

The name of Father is at the commencement, 1st, to excite our confidence; it is to our Father that we pray; 2d, to touch the heart of God; those who pray are his children.

When calling him *our Father*, we remember that we are all brethren, since we have a common Father. The heathens, who have not received the grace of adoption, have not, like us, the right of calling him our Father, and the only Son whom he engendered from all eternity is properly the only person who has the right of calling him—my Father.

Who art in heaven. God is everywhere, but heaven is the abode of his glory, and the inheritance which he has prepared for his children. Where can we more willingly contemplate him than in the place where he reigns with the greatest lustre, and where we are to reign eternally with him? *Hallowed be thy name.* The name of God is essentially holy, says Saint Augustine; wherefore all that we can ask for here is, that his sanctity may be known and confessed by all men. *Thy kingdom come.* Reign everywhere without opposition, and hasten the arrival of that great day when all thy friends shall be side by side with thee, and all thy enemies at thy feet. *Thy will be done,* &c. Those

After having given us this admirable prayer, Jesus Christ refers again to the fifth petition in it, to make us understand that it comprehends a species of treaty between God and man, by which God undertakes to forgive the man who forgives, and the man who doth not forgive virtually refuses to obtain from God the pardon of his

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who love God desire the most perfect accomplishment of his will that can possibly be imagined. In heaven but one will is accomplished, that of God, because all others are perfectly conformable to it. We ask for the same state of things to be on earth; if we cannot obtain it for all men, each may obtain it for himself, and the earth has the happiness of still possessing souls sufficiently angelical to render it easy for us to judge that this petition is not without effect. *Give us this day our daily bread*—that is to say, whatsoever is necessary and sufficient for the support of the life of the body. *This day:* for who knows whether he shall see the morrow? *Our daily bread:* We read it thus in Saint Luke. In Saint Matthew we read *super-substantial bread.* The Greek word is the same in the two evangelists, and there is every appearance that the *super-substantial* of Saint Matthew bears the same sense as the *daily* of Saint Luke. The first may signify the bread necessary to the support of our substance, that is to say, of our body, or indeed the bread which corresponds to the substance of this day; for the Hebrews, in order to signify the present day, said the *substance of the present day;* and we know that Saint Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew (Maldon on Saint Matthew, p. 147). This bread, above all substance, is also, according to the Fathers, the Eucharistic bread; for this sense, although mystic, is not the less on that account here a direct and literal sense. If it be reasonable for us to ask for the bread which nourishes the body, how much more so is it to ask for the bread which supports the life of our souls? And can we pray to our Father without asking from him the bread which is by excellence the bread of the children?

And forgive us our debts. Our offences, which render us, with regard to God, insolvent debtors. God, nevertheless, consents to remit to us these immense debts, these ten thousand talents; provided that we remit to our brethren the few pence wherein they may stand indebted to us. This is drawing good from evil, and causing life to issue from the bosom of death, whilst we learn from our own sins to grant unto others a pardon which we are so much in want of ourselves.

And lead us not into temptation. God does not tempt us; but he permits us to be tempted, and the experience which we have of our weakness makes us beg of God not to allow it—a prayer which God grants by diminishing temptations and redoubling his help.

But deliver us from evil. The Latin word signifies, equally, *the evil* or *the wicked* one. The Greek word properly signifies the *evil* one, that is to say, the demon. As to the sense, it is quite equal to ask from God that he should deliver us from the evil which the wicked one doth, or from the wicked one that doth the evil.

There are two parts in this prayer: the first appears to have only in view the interests of God; the second part is for us. Good children should desire the prosperity of their father before their own. The glory of God is more advantageous to ourselves than we think. If it were not so, would the Church say to God: *We thank thee for the greatness of thy glory?*

sins. This truth, equally terrible and consoling, is expressed by these words: (*a*) "For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences."

Now, if we pray after the manner prescribed to us, we may reckon as certain that our Father will hear us. His word is express, and his goodness alone is as infallible a guarantee to us as his truth. For Jesus Christ saith further: (*b*) "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. And which of you, if he ask his father bread, will he give him a stone (27)? or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or, if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask him? When you fast," *continues the Saviour*, "be not as the hypocrites, sad: for they disfigure their faces (28), that they may appear unto men to fast. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head (29), and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee."

Therefore we must have God alone in view in all the good works that we perform. This simplicity of purpose and purity of intention is what renders them virtuous and worthy of recompense. But

(*a*) St. Matthew, vi. 14, 15. (*b*) St. Luke, xi. 9–31; St. Matthew, vi. 16–18.

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(27) We ask from God what we think to be bread, and which is in reality a stone. God gives to us what appears a stone, but which, nevertheless, is bread. God listens when he seems to refuse. He would have refused if he had appeared to listen. For after all, what is sought for is bread.

(28) Some think that they rubbed their faces with certain compositions, which rendered them pale and livid. This was the artificial coloring of hypocrisy.

(29) Supposing, besides, you did mean to perfume the head upon that day: for if a person only perfumed on fast days, then perfumery, instead of dissembling the fast, would announce it. Therefore affect nothing, and conceal the mortifications which you should practise in secret.

if vanity or interest is their sole or principal object, that is to say, if the intention be corrupt, this vitiates every act we perform, as Jesus Christ gives us to understand by this elegant metaphor: (*a*) "The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome; but if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be darksome. If, then, the light that is in thee be darkness, the darkness itself how great shall it be!"

CHAPTER XVII.

CONTINUATION OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

PRIDE, lust, anger, and vindictiveness—that is to say, almost all the passions—were overthrown by these divine precepts. Jesus Christ had attacked them even in the very heart of man, where they could no longer exist after the deadly blows he had given them. For, widely different from the Pharisees, who cleansed the exterior, and left all corruption within, this wise physician applied himself to rectify the interior, without which the exterior, even supposing it were well regulated, would only be a deceitful show, and vice glossed over with the colors of virtue. There remained one more passion to be subdued—this was avarice—of all the passions, the one which strikes its roots the deepest into the soul, and is the most difficult to be extirpated. Jesus Christ exhibits its folly, in hoarding up goods which it seldom enjoys; its disorderly character, engrossing as it does the whole heart, to the exclusion of every thought and desire of heaven; its illusion, in endeavoring against reason and experience, cunningly to ally its schemes with the service of God: for nearly all avaricious men would fain be devout, and persuade themselves that they are so. Lastly, pursuant to his ordinary method, Jesus Christ attacks this passion in the heart, by stripping it of the most specious of all its pretexts, which is the fear

(*a*) St. Matthew, vi. 22, 23.

of future want. This excellent lesson constitutes the subject of the following articles:

(*a*) "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven (1), where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also."

"No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (2). Therefore, I say to you: Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat, and the body more than the raiment? Behold the birds of the air: they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? Now, which of you, by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labor not, neither do they spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon, in all his glory, was arrayed as one of these. Now, if the grass of the field, which is to-day, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe, how much more ye, O ye of little faith! Be not solicitous, therefore, saying: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after these (3) things do the heathens seek, and your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God

(*a*) St. Matthew, vi. 19–21; 24–34.

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(1) This is principally done by alms. Keeping one's goods is, therefore, losing them; and giving them, is treasuring them up.

(2) Remark the propriety of the term: for a person can possess riches and serve God, but we cannot be subject to riches and serve God.

(3) God does not prohibit foresight, but he prohibits anxiety, as injurious to his parental providence.

Not to trouble ourselves about this present life, and to occupy ourselves entirely about the future life, are, in two words, what we ought to do, and the contrary of what we actually do.

and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not, therefore, solicitous for to-morrow; for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

The judgments which we are in the habit of passing upon one another occupy a position here which shows how much more important this matter seemed to Jesus Christ than to the majority of mankind, who scarcely reckon as faults the transgressions of this kind which they daily commit. Their consequence will be better known, when we shall have seen what recompense Jesus Christ promises to those who do not judge, and what a judgment he reserves for those who do (4). "Judge not," he says, "and you shall not be judged; condemn not, and you shall not be condemned; for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged (5). And why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye? Or how sayest thou to thy brother: Let me cast the mote out of thine eye, and behold, a beam is in thy own eye? Thou hypocrite (6), cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

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(4) We do not judge, but we see what is as clear as day. Beyond this never *judge*, if you be not a judge. You are such with regard to those over whom you have a right of correction. We may be allowed to act upon a legitimate suspicion; but we are not permitted to judge. That a man's fidelity is suspected is not enough to entitle us to judge him faithless, although it be enough to enable us in certain circumstances to displace or discharge him, on account of the right which we have to make use of only persons of unsuspected fidelity. Whilst this right is well known, its limits are scarcely ever known; for we do not only form the judgment, but we *pronounce* and we publish it, without dreaming that a subordinate, and perhaps a servant, has no less a right to his reputation than the master has to his own, and that often this reputation is even more necessary to the servant. This is one of those sins which are never remitted, if there be not reparation made.

(5) That is to say, that those who shall have judged rigorously shall be judged with rigor; for the judgments of God shall neither be false nor rash, like ours. In what, therefore, could they resemble ours, if not by severity? There are two ways of judging the guilty, even when attainted and convicted—one full of sternness and harshness—the other meek and indulgent. The first was that of the Pharisees—the second that of Jesus Christ, who said to the adulterous woman: *Neither will I condemn thee.*

(6) Because censure supposes the zeal of justice, and is the expression of it. Now, he who does not commence by condemning himself, has not truly the zeal of justice. He, therefore, only wears the mask of justice, and this it is that makes him a hypocrite.

We have already remarked, that throughout this entire discourse Jesus Christ had the apostles more directly in view, and that amongst the precepts he gives, some only apply to them and their successors in the ministry. We now call the reader's attention to one of the latter class. "Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest, perhaps, they trample them under their feet, and, turning upon you, they tear you (7)." Which signifies that we must not expose holy things to profanation, nor announce the Gospel truths, when we could not reasonably expect any other fruit than to irritate those to whom they are announced, and to attract from these individuals a persecution detrimental to the preacher, and perhaps to the whole Church. Zeal should, therefore, be intelligent—many people will tell you so. But intelligence should not be devoid of zeal; and, if indiscretion is blameworthy, cowardice is more so. Let us add, that it is more common, because human interests find here a good consideration. In the apostles' time, it was necessary to recommend discretion rather than zeal. At other periods, the reverse was the case: zeal, not discretion, required to be inculcated.

After having laid down the law, Jesus Christ had now nothing more to do but to fortify his followers against the false constructions which might be put upon it. These were to be of two kinds. They might be explained, first of all, by custom, which is, they say, the best interpreter of laws. Jesus Christ gives us to understand that this maxim has no connection with his law. He formally declares that the majority shall be prevaricators, and that the number of faithful observers shall be beyond comparison the smallest of the two; that, therefore, his law should be understood and observed to

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(7) If any one be tempted to believe that Jesus Christ acted contrary to his own maxim, when he announced his doctrine to the Jews, to whom it was useless, and to the Pharisees, whose fury it excited, we answer: 1st. That many listened with docility and profited by his instructions. 2d. When he taught the Jews, he taught all nations and all ages, to whom his doctrine should be repeated. 3d. The contradictions which it drew upon him should, by causing his death, occasion the redemption of mankind. Persecution, even when foreseen, should not hinder preaching: it should only suspend that preaching, which could have no other effect than exciting persecution, or could not produce sufficient fruit to counterbalance the evil of persecution.

the letter, or, if we wish to explain it by practice, we seek the true construction in the practice of the lesser number. The bad construction of the false prophets was the second rock that should be avoided. Jesus Christ teaches us how to know these dangerous men, and thus gives notes of them beforehand to those who are sincerely desirous of not being seduced. For the false prophet, when once he is unmasked, only takes in those who wish to be taken in. Here are the very words of the Saviour: (*a*) "Enter ye in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. O, how narrow is the gate!" he exclaims, in a tone which should strike dread into every heart—"O, how narrow is the gate, and straight is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!" This says a great deal in a few words. Directly he adds: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits you shall know them (8). Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit (9). Every tree that bringeth not

(*a*) St. Matthew, vii. 13; St. Luke, vi. 45.

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(8) That is to say, by their works. A work, if bad, may decide that the prophet is false. A good work does not equally decide the true prophet. We have seen already that there are ostentatious prayers, proud fastings, and pharisaical alms. Humility and charity are the least equivocal marks. In vain may the false prophet disguise himself; he is always despising and slandering, and he is not slow in appearing. Yet, a person may neither be humble nor charitable, and still not be a false prophet. There are men who do wrong, and teach good. Works are not, therefore, an infallible rule to distinguish the true from the false, and Jesus Christ only proposes them as a prudent rule to discern between those whom we ought to reprove, and those whom we ought, at least, to distrust.

(9) It would be troublesome to reckon all the errors which have been built upon this maxim. The most impious was that of the Manicheans, who made use of it to defend their dogma of men born and necessitated to good, and of men born wicked, and necessitated to evil. The most silly was that of the Pelagians, who inferred from it that there was no original sin, because then would a bad fruit spring from marriage, which is a good tree. The most generally known is that which the Council of Trent condemns in Protestants, who concluded from it that all the actions of sinners and of the unbelieving are so many sins.

forth good fruit shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits you shall know them. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CLOSE OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

JESUS ended by saying that which is the natural conclusion of a discourse like this—that he doth not give his law to men in order to gratify their curiosity, or to furnish them with matter for eloquence, but in order that they may observe it, and save themselves by the observance. He who shall have observed it shall be saved; but he who shall not have observed it shall be condemned, even if in other respects he were a prophet and a man of all power; for these gifts, which God grants for the good of his Church, do not presuppose sanctity in those who receive them. Judas, and several others in the commencement of Christianity, are a proof that the gift of miracles is not absolutely incompatible with the state of sin. But had we not this fact in proof, it suffices for conviction, to hear the anticipated judgment which Jesus Christ is going to pronounce against several of these prevaricating prophets and reprobate work-

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The good or bad tree, and the good or bad man, have some points of resemblance: it is in these points that Jesus Christ compares them. There are also essential differences between them, and it is by comparing these differences that persons are misled. The good tree cannot render itself bad, and the good man can render himself bad, by abusing his liberty. The bad tree cannot render itself good, and the bad man can, by his free co-operation with grace, become good and just. The bad tree cannot produce a good fruit, because its productions are always conformable to its nature, which is bad; but the bad man may absolutely produce an action which is not bad, because, being free, he may not always act conformably to his bad disposition. We, therefore, judge infallibly of the tree by its fruits, and morally of the man by his works. And, when we speak of the man, we mean his doctrine; for this is what is here referred to.

ers of miracles. (*a*) "Why," saith he to them, "do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name? and done many miracles in thy name? And then I will profess unto them: I never knew you; depart from me, you that work iniquity."

Thus, it is by deeds, not by words, that Jesus Christ will recognize his own. We shall not be commended for what we shall have said, or for what we shall have learned, but for what we shall have done. Happy he who shall have put in practice the knowledge which God has given him of his law! Unfortunate, on the contrary, he who, limiting himself to knowledge, shall not have produced fruit therefrom! But that which, on that great day, shall constitute the difference between happiness and misfortune, makes at present the distinction between wisdom and folly. Oh, how many shall be found truly wise whom we at present treat as simple and ignorant; and how many silly amongst those whom we now recognize, not merely as wise, but as masters of wisdom! This is what Jesus Christ intimates to us by these last words: "Every one that cometh to me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like to a man building a house, who digged deep, and laid the foundation upon a rock: the rain fell, the floods came, the winds blew, and they beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded on a rock. But he that heareth these my words, and doeth them not, shall be like a foolish man, that built his house upon the sand. The rain fell, the floods came, the winds blew, and they beat upon that house; it fell, and great was the fall thereof. Jesus, having fully ended these words, the people were in admiration of his doctrine. For [*it was again said*] he was teaching them as one having power, and not as the Scribes, and as the Pharisees (1)."

There are reasons for believing that the whole of this discourse

(*a*) St. Luke, vi. 46–48; St. Matthew, vii. 21–23; 25–29.

(1) See note 3 of chapter x., page 73.

was not spoken then upon the mountain, but that on the occasion of the sermon which Jesus Christ there gave, the Gospel reports several other maxims of the Saviour, pronounced at other times, and which, when added to those he proposed on this occasion, constitute a body of doctrine, which may be regarded as the abridgment of the Christian law. It might have been observed, that we did not always constrain ourselves to follow the order in which they are found placed in the sacred text. We have done this, in order to place consecutively those which refer to the same subject. The interpreters are not sufficiently agreed whether the evangelists themselves ranged them in the order in which the Saviour spoke them. This order was not necessary, since the Holy Ghost did not inspire them to follow it; but we were obliged to draw them together thus in a work which has for its principal object to connect their sacred words, and to compound from them a consecutive and methodical narrative.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LEPER CLEANSED.—THE CENTURION'S SERVANT.—THE WIDOW OF NAIM'S SON RESTORED TO LIFE.—JOHN SENDS TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES TO CHRIST.—HE IS COMMENDED BY JESUS CHRIST.

We return to the details of the actions of the Saviour, in which an attentive mind will find no less instruction than in his discourses. (*a*) "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him: and behold a leper came to him, and adored him, beseeching him, and kneeling down, said to him: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Jesus having compassion on him, stretched forth his hand, touched him, and saith to him: I will; be thou cleansed. Immediately the leprosy departed from the man, and he was made clean. Jesus forthwith sent him away, and he strictly

(*a*) St. Matthew, viii. 1, 2; St. Mark, i. 40–45; St. Luke, v. 12, 13.

charged him: See thou tell no man (1). But go show thyself to the high priest (2), and for a testimony unto them, offer the things that Moses commanded (3). But he being gone out, began to publish, and to blaze abroad the word; so that Jesus could not openly go into the city, but was without in desert places. But they flocked to him from all sides to hear him, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. And Jesus" withdrew from them from time to time, and "retired into the desert and prayed."

Charity soon obliged him to leave it, and return to those places which he avoided with so much care. (*a*) "He entered [*then*] into Capharnaum," where he found at his very arrival what his kind foresight had come to seek. "The servant of a centurion, who was dear

(*a*) St. Luke, vii. 1; St. Matthew, viii. 6, 7.

(1) We have already stated in note 5, chap. xii., page 92, the several reasons on account of which Jesus Christ sometimes exacted secrecy from those whom he had miraculously cured. There remains one difficulty with regard to this man. It appears that he was cured in the sight of a great number. Could Jesus Christ reasonably expect that so public an action should remain secret? It is answered, that it was not impossible that the miracle may only have been perceived by a very small number. In the crowd a leper may not have been recognized as being a leper. Had this man been so recognized, would the Jews have allowed him to push himself so far forward, and to penetrate to the very feet of the Saviour? If the disease might not have been perceived, the cure might equally have escaped so great a number. The cure being asked in so few words, and obtained by a simple touch, accompanied by two words, it might only have been remarked by the disciples, who apparently surrounded the Saviour, and concealed him, at least in part, from the eyes of the multitude.

(2) Several interpreters have asserted that Jesus Christ sent the cured leper to show himself to the priests, in order that they might not have it in their power to contest the miracle after they themselves had recognized and declared it. There is no appearance of his having had this design in view. A person might be cured of the leprosy by natural means, and the inspection of this man might be an assurance of his cure, but not of the miraculous manner in which it had been wrought. It was, therefore, out of deference to the law that Jesus Christ obliged him to take this step. But had he not also violated the law by touching this man? Without here animadverting upon the incontestible titles which dispensed him from the law, we may say that, in appearing to depart from the letter, he had followed the spirit of it. The law forbade to touch a leper, because leprosy, being a highly contagious disease, communicated itself by the touch. The touch of Jesus Christ, whilst salutary to the leper whom he touched, could not be dangerous to himself; and the law, which forbid contact that might multiply lepers, was very far from prohibiting that contact which diminished the number of lepers.

(3) The rite for the purification of lepers is to be found in the 14th chapter of Leviticus, from the 2d to the 31st verse, inclusive.

to him, being sick, was ready to die. When he had heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the ancients of the Jews, desiring him to come and heal his servant, saying: Lord, my servant lieth at home sick, and is grievously tormented. When they came to Jesus, they besought him earnestly, saying to him: He is worthy that thou should do this for him; for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue." The seeking to interest him by this motive was, notwithstanding whatever may have since been said upon the subject, acknowledging Jesus to be a good citizen. His answer must have confirmed them in this idea. "I will come, said he to him, and heal him."

"He went with them, and when he was not far from the house, the centurion," whose faith had received a new impulse sent his friends to him, saying, on his part, those words which Jesus Christ has praised so highly, and which the Church has treasured as the expression of the most profound humility: (*a*) "Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof. For which cause neither did I think myself worthy to come to thee: but say the word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to one: Go, and he goeth; and to another: Come, and he cometh; and to my servant: Do this, and he doeth it." This was confessing that for a much stronger reason, Jesus, who was master of all things, and who recognized no master in the universe, had only to speak to be obeyed by all nature. "Jesus, hearing this, marvelled (4), and turning about to the multitude that followed him, said: Amen, I say to you, I have not found so great faith, not even in Israel (5). And I

(*a*) St. Luke, vii. 6–10; St. Matthew, viii. 11–13.

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(4) Admiration, properly speaking, is excited by some unforeseen occurrence, or by some unknown and new object; it therefore always supposes some want of previous knowledge, and cannot belong to Jesus Christ, who knows and is aware of every thing, and who could not be ignorant, particularly of the centurion's faith, which was his own work, since it had been produced by his grace; but he assumed the air and the tone of admiration to conform to our ways of acting, and to teach us what we should admire.

(5) Several interpreters except the apostles; all, the Blessed Virgin and Saint John the Baptist. Jesus Christ speaks here of the nation in general, without including special vocations and privileged souls. A king may say, speaking of one of his subjects, there

say to you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down (6) with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven (7), but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. [Then] Jesus said to the centurion," through the intervention of those whom the latter had deputed: "Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee (8); and the servant was healed at the same hour; and they who were sent being returned to the house, found the servant whole who had been sick."

(*a*) "Jesus went [after] into a city called Naim: there went with him his disciples, and a great multitude." We have already seen

(*a*) St. Luke, vii. 11–17.

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is no one in my kingdom who has such affection for me as this person, although the king be not ignorant that he is much dearer to his wife and to his children.

(6) The Latin word signifies supper, which was properly the repast of the ancients. Scripture often compares to it the happiness of heaven. What follows continues the comparison. Whilst strangers shall be sitting there with the patriarchs, the children of the kingdom, that is to say, the Jews, who, by virtue of the promises, had that right to it which children have to sit at the table of their father, shall be driven from it and *cast out into exterior darkness*. When supper is going on, the light is in the apartment, and darkness is outside. There they shall weep from grief, and shall gnash their teeth with rage, at seeing themselves excluded from the feast to which they first of all had been called.

(7) By the kingdom of heaven some understand here the Church, or faith in Jesus Christ. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have believed in the Messiah who was to come, as we believe in the Messiah who is come; they, therefore, were members of the Church as well as the Gentiles. Moreover, we know that the Gentiles shall have their place in heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The kingdom, therefore, is both the Church and heaven, the happiness of which is represented by the feast, as exterior darkness is the image of hell, the punishment of which is expressed by weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(8) Jesus Christ appears to speak to the centurion as if he were present; and it seems, according to Saint Matthew, that in reality he was present in person. According to Saint Luke, he did not deem himself worthy to present himself before Jesus Christ, and he first deputes the ancients of the Jews, and then his friends. This difference has induced the belief that these were two different occurrences; but there is a groundwork of resemblance which decides that it is the same. In both narratives we have a centurion, a sick servant, the same discourse of the Master, and the same prayer to Jesus Christ not to come to his residence, the same faith, and on the part of Jesus Christ the same admiration which makes him say that he has not found such great faith in Israel. With all this, it is still in any one's power to cavil at the difference; but at bottom it is the same narrative, and good sense will not permit us to entertain a doubt on the subject.

that the Jews were in the habit of interring their dead outside of the cities, whether to avoid some legal penalty, or whether this was merely a salutary civic regulation. "When, *therefore*, he came nigh to the gate of the city (9), behold," by one of those seeming chances which were never such to the Saviour, "a dead man was carried out. He was the only son of his mother, and she a widow, and a great multitude of the city was with her. Whom, when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, Weep not, he said to her. And he came near and touched the bier. They that carried it stood still." Then assuming an absolute tone, which only suits the sovereign arbiter of life and death: "Young man, said he, arise, I say to thee. He that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and Jesus gave him to his mother. There came a [*religious*] fear upon them all, and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people. This rumor of him went forth throughout all Judea, and all the country round about."

The miracle at last reached the ears of John, who, though detained in a prison, into which he had been cast by the incestuous Herod, was not kept in such solitary confinement as to be deprived of outside communication. There he was visited, and in pursuance of the practice of saints, who perform all the good they can, when they cannot perform all they might wish to do, he announced the Messiah, at least to his disciples, and profited by the occasions which were offered to make him known to them. That which presented

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(9) The meeting of the people who followed Jesus, with the crowd that accompanied the funeral, furnished spectators to this miracle; and it is certain that Jesus Christ wished to make it public. The interpreters add, besides, to the gathering the people who happened to be waiting at the gate of the city for the legal decisions. We read, in point of fact, in Scripture, that the Israelites held there a sort of court, where causes were decided; but did this custom still exist in the time of Jesus Christ? The texts which are cited with reference to this matter are not posterior to the times of the kings of Juda. In matters of custom, several centuries make great changes, especially among a people who, during various transmigrations, might have quitted many of its usages to assume those of the nation in whose midst it dwelt. It sometimes occurs to interpreters to give thus as customs of the time of Jesus Christ those for which we find no example but in centuries much anterior. Nothing is more uncertain, and we have thought that it might not be useless to make this remark here.

itself on the occasion of this miracle was one too favorable to be overlooked by him. (*a*) "When, *therefore*, he had heard in prison," the rigor of which this recital had made him forget ("his disciples told him of all these things), he called to him two of his disciples, and sent them to Jesus, saying: Art thou he that art to come, or look we for another?" It is not difficult to penetrate his design. John could not be ignorant what Jesus was, he who made him known to others, nor could he begin to doubt if he were the Messiah when he heard of him working miracles, after having recognized him before he had worked any. But his disciples, always too much pre possessed in favor of their master, still doubted whether Jesus was preferable to him. John wished them to see him with their own eyes, the evidence of which would complete their conviction, although, with regard to them, it should not have greater certainty than the testimony they had heard from his lips. The two deputies, who apparently were some of the most incredulous, "when they were come unto Jesus: John the Baptist," said they, "hath sent us to thee, saying: Art thou he that art to come, or look we for another?" Before replying to them, Jesus did what John had foreseen. "In that same hour he cured many of their diseases and hurts," with which they were afflicted, "and of evil spirits, which possessed them: to many that were blind he gave sight. *Then*, making answer, he said to John's disciples: Go, relate to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk (10), the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, to the poor the Gospel is preached (11): blessed is he whosoever shall not be scandalized in me."

(*a*) St. Matthew, xi. 2; St. Luke, vii. 18–23.

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(10) We read in the 35th chapter of Isaiah, that in the time of the Messiah the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unclosed; that then the lame man shall leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free. Jesus Christ manifestly makes allusion to these words, which allusion furnishes the disciples of John with a double proof—that of his miracles, and the accomplishment of the prophecies regarding him.

(11) He who would preach only for the rich, would prove nothing, for he would not even prove that he is persuaded of the truths that he preaches. So disinterested a charity becomes a proof of religion, comparable to the cure of the blind and the resurrection

This answer is addressed to John, because the demand was made in his name; but, at bottom, it was for the disciples it was made. The conclusion of the answer completely demonstrated this. Happy, in point of fact, whosoever does not become scandalized in Jesus Christ! The greatest misfortune of the Jews was their being scandalized in him. But this had a particular application to the disciples of John, who had taken scandal, because Jesus Christ did not prescribe to his disciples a kind of life as austere as what they practised themselves; and we have not forgotten that they combined with the Pharisees to make this a cause of reproach against him. Here, then, they found all that they needed—proof of the mission of Jesus Christ by miracles, to which he condescended to let them be ocular witnesses, and, moreover, a preservative against every thing that could alienate them from his person. Neither one nor the other was necessary to John the Baptist. Wherefore the Saviour had nothing to give him but eulogy, the most magnificent that ever issued from his sacred lips, but of which no person could have been less worthy than the precursor, if, after having been blessed beforehand with so many lights, he had been capable of doubting, for one instant, that Jesus was truly the Messiah.

For whether Jesus Christ wished only to praise John, or whether his design was to hinder, at the same time, those who had witnessed the deputation from believing that John vacillated in the testimony he had rendered to him, (*a*) "when the messengers were departed, Jesus began to speak concerning John," and beginning by praise of his unshakable firmness, "he began to say to the multitudes" who listened to him: "What went you out to the desert to see? a reed shaken with the wind?" Could a soul so superficial, and a character so frivolous, excite to such a pitch your curiosity and your admiration? "But what went you out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? Behold, they that are clothed in costly apparel and live delicately are in the houses of kings." Another circumstance which gives weight to the testimony of John. A man devoted to such an

(*a*) St. Luke, vii. 24–26, 28; St. Matthew, xi. 10–14.

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of the dead. Would to Heaven that it had no other point of resemblance to these prodigies—that of being as rare!

austere course of life, having no wants, had no interest in this world. He could not, therefore, be suspected of flattery; for what profit could he have derived from it? "But," in short, adds the Saviour, "what, *then*, went you out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee (12). For, amen, I say to you, amongst those that are born of women, there is not a greater than John the Baptist (13). Yet he that is lesser in the kingdom of God is greater than he." Such is the superiority of the law which commences at the close of the existing law, that the first of the one, in the order of the ministry, is the last of the other. For here a new order of things is actually being established, and John, placed between the two Testaments, terminates the ancient, and announces the new. "From the days *of the preaching* of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven," previously proposed to one nation alone, "is open to all people." Let the Jews cease to boast of the rights to which they lay claim. This is not an inheritance in which children must succeed to their

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(12) God said, in Malachy, chapter iii.: *Behold, I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face.* In the prophet it is the Son who speaks; in the evangelist it is the Son who makes the Father speak; in both cases it is always God, and the same God; and the difference of the two texts shows the distinction and the equality of the persons. This is the first proof which Jesus Christ gives of the superiority of John over all the other prophets; for he is the only prophet who has been foretold. He is called angel, which signifies *sent*, on account of his office, and also on account of his life, more angelical than human, which, as Eusebius reports (Demon. Evang., lib. ix., chap. 5), made some believe that, in point of fact, and by nature, John was not a man, but an angel. No doubt they were deceived; but then it was a matter in which they might easily be so.

(13) Saint Matthew only says: *There has not arisen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist.* What he says before and after lets us easily see that it is with reference to prophecy that John is preferred to all that had appeared up to that time. Saint Luke, who says plainly that there is no greater prophet than John the Baptist, does not permit us to doubt any longer of this being its literal sense. The text of Saint Matthew has made some believe that Saint John was the greatest saint, as well in the Old as in the New Testament; or, to speak with more precision, that none was more saintly than he; for the text does not exclude equality. This sense, although not literal, should always be respected, because it has been always followed by antiquity, and the Church seems to have adopted it in these words, which it sings in honor of the holy precursor: *No one in this vast universe has been more holy than Saint John.*

fathers; it is a conquest reserved for whosoever shall have the courage to carry it sword in hand: it suffereth violence, and the "violent bear it away. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." But prophecy ceases when accomplishment begins. True, you think that Elias should be the precursor of the Messiah; but "if you will receive it, John is Elias that is to come. He who hath ears to hear, let him hear (14)."

Informed of what John the Baptist really was, and of the interesting object of his mission, (*a*) "the people and the publicans, being baptized with John's baptism, hearing, justified God," and recognized his justice in the means by which he attained his ends. "But the Pharisees and the lawyers, being not baptized by John (15), despised the council of God against themselves," and their inflexible stubbornness in rejecting all the means which God had set in motion to gain them over, drew down upon them this just reproach: "Whereunto, said he, shall I liken the men of this generation, and

(*a*) St. Luke, vii. 29–35.

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(14) Jesus Christ sometimes makes use of this conclusion when his words have a mysterious and profound sense, or when they propose a sublime perfection. The words which he has just spoken are of the first kind; and we do not flatter ourselves that the explanation inserted in the text removes all the difficulties: here is an abstract thereof, which may throw further light upon it. John is declared to be the greatest of the children of women, not for his sanctity, if we confine ourselves to the literal sense, but for his quality of immediate precursor of the Messiah, a quality which raises him above all the prophets. But the Church, which the Messiah came to found, is so superior to the synagogue, that the lowest of its ministers is, by his ministry, superior to John himself. This Church is actually established, and is designated by the most magnificent characters, by its universality, which embraces all people, called from the four parts of the world to enter into it as into a conquered country. The preaching of John was given to announce its establishment, and the cessation of the law and of the prophets, which only served as preparatives to it. The Jews were under the persuasion that Elias should precede the Messiah. John has the spirit and virtue of Elias, and in this matter their expectation is already fulfilled, without reference as to what shall happen at the second coming, when every one agrees that the Messiah shall be preceded by Elias in person.

(15) It was through the baptism of John that God wished to bring them to the faith. The contempt of the smallest grace made them miss the decisive grace of salvation. The chain, being once broken, was never more renewed for them. Let us profit from every thing, since the greatest things are often hinged upon the smallest, and that it is not impossible that the very thing upon which all depends seems to dwindle to a mere trifle.

to what are they like? They are like to children (16) sitting in the market-place, speaking one to another, and saying: We have piped to you, and you have not danced; we have mourned, and you have not wept. For John the Baptist came, neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and you say: He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and you say: Behold a man that is a glutton and a drinker of wine, a friend of publicans and sinners. *Thus* wisdom is justified by all her children," not merely by those who have been docile to her voice, but also by the rebellious. Did the latter wish for an austere life? They found that in Saint John the Baptist. Did they like a common life? Such was the life of Jesus Christ. Take the two opposite kinds of life: criticism of the one was apology for the other, and meant respectively preference of one to the other. In this state of things, to be scandalized at both one and the other, and not submit to either, is a declaration of purpose to be scandalized at every thing, and submit to nothing. As regarded God, the means did not fail, but they became useless, by the obstinacy of the incredulous, and the reasons which the latter advanced to elude them were at the same time the apology of God's conduct, and the condemnation of their own incredulity. Let us not be surprised that they should be included under the common denomination of children of wisdom. All the Jews had God for their legislator, and his wisdom for their director; and, though for the most part bad disciples, they were not the less under her discipline; and in this sense all might be called her children.

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(16) It is not the incredulous Jews, it is Jesus Christ and Saint John who are compared to children who sing and weep; and unbelievers are compared to children whom others cannot induce by any means to share in their joys or sorrows. This mode of comparison is not unexampled in Scripture, which often compares the whole to the whole, leaving to the attentive reader the care of distributing the different members of the comparison.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HOLY WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS CHRIST.—HIS FRIENDS WISH TO SEIZE HIS PERSON.—HEALING OF A BLIND AND DUMB MAN WHO WAS POSSESSED.—BLASPHEMY OF THE PHARISEES.—SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

MEANTIME "Jesus," whose zeal could neither be blunted by contradiction, nor exhausted by toil, (*a*) "travelled through the cities and towns, preaching and evangelizing the kingdom of God. The twelve," to whom his examples were to serve as lessons for the same ministry, "were with him. And [there also were] with him certain women (1) who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, *viz.:* Mary, who is called Magdalen (2), out of whom seven devils were

(*a*) St. Luke, viii. 1, 2.

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(1) Perhaps we may be surprised that Jesus Christ should have suffered women in his retinue. It was, says Saint Jerome, an established usage among the Jews, that women, and especially widows, should follow their religious teachers, and administer to their wants. The custom took away the scandal, and assuredly the Jews took no scandal at Jesus on this account, since they never made any reproach to him concerning it, whilst they calumniated him upon every thing else. The apostles conducted themselves in the same way as their divine Master. Saint Paul decides positively that they had a right to do so. If he did not avail himself of this right, it was out of precaution for the Gentiles, who, not being aware of this usage, might thereupon take scandal. The heretics have much too far abused it; and you will find very few sects, indeed, who have failed to avail themselves of it. We, therefore, have a right to this usage founded on the example of Jesus Christ. We have, in the example of Saint Paul, reserve, if, when availing ourselves of the right, there be apprehensions lest people should be scandalized; and in heretics, we have the abuse; the consequences of which should make those persons tremble who are so badly advised as to attach themselves to these false teachers. For, if she who serves the apostle shall have the same reward as he, the punishment of the heresiarch shall therefore be reserved for her who shall have served the heresiarch.

(2) The reader has seen, page 104, Chap. XIV., the reasons on account of which we do not distinguish her from the penitent woman, nor from Mary, the sister of Lazarus, and of Martha. Some interpreters understand by the seven demons, the vices from which she was delivered. Others hold that she really was possessed by seven demons, whom Jesus Christ expelled from her body by the virtue of his word. Those who declare themselves to be of this opinion should add, that this deliverance preceded, and apparently occasioned the conversion of Magdalen.

gone forth; Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward; Susanna, and many others who ministered unto him of their substance." They, in this way, all contributed their part to the apostolical functions, and deserved to share the recompense thereof; for the supporting an apostle is preaching by his mouth, since he could not preach if he were diverted from it by the care of procuring the necessaries of life.

During the course of this mission, those who accompanied him (*a*) "came to a house" to rest themselves; but "the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread." Meantime reports of what he had done were spreading throughout the country. "When his friends had heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him (3); for they said: He is become mad." These good people could not persuade themselves that he whom they had seen reared amongst them, and like one of themselves, could be a prophet and a worker of miracles. They concluded, therefore, from the rumors afloat about him, that he had lost his wits, and thought they performed the office of good friends by seizing his person; for it does not appear to have been a malicious act on their part. This was that weakness usual to persons of limited understanding, and who, having received no education, are incapable of believing any thing beyond the sphere of their sight, or the range of their fancy.

(*a*) St. Mark, iii. 20, 21.

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(3) There is something here which creates embarrassment, viz.: it seems, by the sequel, that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was with them. To believe that she had the same idea of Jesus which they had conceived, and that she shared in the design of seizing him, is a thing the very thought of which strikes us with horror; but it is not difficult to exculpate her from this. 1st. Although it may be probable enough, yet it is not certain that this is the same occasion whereon Jesus got notice that his mother and his brothers were waiting for him at the door; it is not, therefore, certain that Mary was to be found present upon this occasion, because this only could occur in the case of its being certain that the fact occurred on one and the same occasion. 2d. Supposing even that it were the same occasion, Mary might have been ignorant of their design, and have come with them, impelled by the desire of seeing her son. Perhaps they had even induced her to join with them, hoping that the son, assured by the presence of his mother, would let himself the more easily be drawn into the snare which they wished to lay for him. Whatever may be the case, we should reject as impiety the very thought, that Mary could have towards her son the idea which his relatives entertained, and that she took part in their plotting.

Now, they had not seen the miracles of Jesus Christ, and they could not imagine that he whom they had seen in the lowliness of infancy, and in the obscurity of a poor workshop, was become suddenly such an extraordinary man. Perhaps that at the same time some free-thinker passed the same judgment upon him; for extremes meet: and as the simple believe nothing beyond what they see, the subtle admit nothing beyond what they understand, as if the mind's eye had not limits as certain, and marked as clearly, as the sight of the body. Wherefore, to measure the extent of possibility by the narrow sphere of our knowledge, is, in both cases, the cause of error; and they are as like each other in their principle as in their consequences. Lastly, this low idea entertained of Jesus Christ by his friends, is a convincing assurance to us, that during the thirty years he had passed at Nazareth, he allowed nothing to escape him which could raise the suspicion of what he was, and that the only virtues perceptible in him were only those suitable to his age and condition —virtues ever estimable, and scarcely noticed by men, who only remark and esteem virtue of a wonderful and dazzling cast. Yet these virtues of each condition and age, when they are practised with inviolable fidelity, and from sublime motives, are virtues which command the approbation of God and the admiration of his angels. For, was there ever an object so worthy of both as this young artisan, unknown to all the world, and, after him, as Mary, his holy mother, shut up in the same cabin, covered with the same obscurity, and similarly occupied in manual labor, of no consideration in the eyes of men?

Still, it does not appear that the Saviour's friends pushed any further the project they had formed against his person; whether they were enlightened by his grace, or arrested by his power, or whether he escaped from them, by rendering himself invisible to their eyes, as he did on another occasion. However the matter occurred, we do not read that he permitted them to lay hands upon him, nor did he discontinue those practices which had given rise to their strange mistake. For it was (*a*) "then was offered to him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and he healed him, so that he spoke and saw. All the multitudes were amazed, and said: Is not

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 22–24; St. Mark, iii. 22; St. Luke, xi. 15, 16.



this the son of David (4)? The Scribes, who were come down from Jerusalem, and the Pharisees, hearing it, said: He hath Beelzebub, and he casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Others, tempting, asked of him a sign from heaven."

We recognize in these traits, in addition to the dark thoughts of envy, incredulity and its pitiful subterfuges. The people, on the contrary, who had neither passions nor predilections, had judged correctly that the author of the great prodigy they had witnessed must needs be the Messiah. For the people never err, when they follow that upright sense which is common to all men, and which is the more accurate and sure, inasmuch as it is the less mixed up with science and subtlety. But if this has given ground for the assertion that the voice of the people is the voice of God, signifying that the people's judgments participate, in some manner, in the infallibility of the divine judgments, still it is far from being as unchangeable. Nothing is so easy as to make the people change their ideas and sentiments, and to make them pass in a moment from admiration to contempt, and from love to hatred. And this was precisely what the envious and the incredulous actually aimed at bringing about. Scattered through the crowd, they had spread the atrocious calumny which we have just heard, when the Saviour, in order to caution that weak and inconstant multitude against these base designs, silenced the tongues of the calumniators, by making them feel the absurdity of the reproach they cast upon him, and the enormity of the crime they thereby committed.

(*a*) "Knowing *then* their thoughts," and aware of their pernicious designs, "and after he had called them together, Jesus said to them in parables: How can Satan cast out Satan? Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation; and if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan

(*a*) St. Luke, xi. 17, 18; St. Mark, iii. 23–26; St. Matthew, xii. 25, 26.

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(4) By excellence, the Son of David, that is to say, the Messiah. This name had been consecrated by tradition with that signification. But was not the crowd who spoke thus composed of Gentiles? We should be driven to say so, if it were true, as some have dreamed, that Gentiles alone gave to the Messiah the title of Son of David.

cast out Satan, he is divided against himself. How, then, shall his kingdom stand? He cannot stand, but hath an end."

Although the irreconcilable enemies of union, still do the demons unite to divide and to injure. They are wise enough to see that, unless there be a certain confederacy amongst them, none of their designs can succeed. This union is that of cabal and faction. Too faithfully imitated by the wicked, it renders them but too effective for mischief; whilst unhappy divisions often cause the failure of the enterprises which the virtuous would wish to undertake for good designs. But, although this first answer of the Saviour silenced his enemies, he yet adds a second, which exhibits to the Pharisees their condemnation, in their own sentiments and in their conduct. For, in all the cases that ever arose in which demons were expelled, except when expelled by Jesus Christ, the Pharisees constantly attributed the act to divine power, and it never occurred to their minds that such acts could be the result of a compact with Satan. To accuse Jesus Christ alone of this, was, therefore, showing upon their part the most glaring, and, at the same time, the most iniquitous partiality. Such is the sequel deducible from these words.

(*a*) "You say that through Beelzebub I cast out devils. Now, if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out (5)?" You have always acknowledged that it was in the name of God. "Therefore they shall be your judges." For, what shall you answer to the reproach they will make you for having stigma-

(*a*) St. Luke, xi. 18.

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(5) An expression used in Scripture, when intending to say those of your nation. The ancients understood it with reference to the apostles, who expelled the demons by the power which Jesus Christ had given to them. The majority of modern interpreters understand it with reference to the Jewish exorcists, who employed with success against the demons certain formulas of conjuration which Solomon had taught them, as Josephus reports, Book viii. of Jewish Antiquities, chapter ii. If the first opinion has in its favor the most respectable authorities, the second has more apparent reasons. 1st. It appears that Jesus Christ had not yet given to his apostles the power of expelling demons, or at least that the apostles had not as yet exercised it. 2d. Supposing that they had then already exercised it, this power being the same at bottom as that of Jesus Christ, the Pharisees might have equally attributed it to the prince of demons, as Jesus Christ even gives us to understand by these words: *If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household!*—(Matthew, x.)

tized as a diabolical operation in me what you regard in them as a divine work? (*a*) "But," adds Jesus Christ, "if I, by the finger of God, cast out devils, doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you."

This was the main truth which Saint John had announced at the outset, which Jesus Christ never ceased repeating, which he had proved by all the miracles he had hitherto worked, but of which the expulsion of demons was in some sort a more direct proof. For this was a direct proof of the destruction of the kingdom of Satan, which kingdom could only be annihilated by the coming of the kingdom of God,—a truth which the Saviour makes manifest by this comparison: "How can any one enter into the house of the strong, and rifle his goods, unless he first bind the strong? When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth. But if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his armor in which he trusted, and will distribute his spoils."

These spoils wrested from Satan are the men whose arms and bodies he possessed, and who are delivered from his tyranny by the power of Jesus Christ. Wherefore, his defeat is certain, and the conqueror can no longer be mistaken.

And this is so evident, that it would be criminal to act with indifference or neutrality towards Jesus Christ, as he assures us by these words which he distinctly adds: (*b*) "He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth." Hence, what must be their crime who declare against him with that excess of malignity and fury which goes to the extent of attributing to the infernal spirits the works of his almighty power? And should we be astonished at his immediately drawing this dreadful conclusion? "Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men; but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven (6). And whoever shall speak a word against the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 28, 29; St. Luke, xi 21, 22.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xii. 30–32; St. Mark, iii. 29.

(6) It is not blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, considered as the third person of the adorable Trinity, but against the Spirit of God, author of the wonders which Jesus Christ

Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come (7). He shall never have forgiveness, and shall be guilty of an everlasting sin." He spoke thus to them, "because they said: He hath an unclean spirit (8)."

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operated. Were we to understand it in the first sense, we should believe that the Eunomians, who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, were the most hardened of all sinners. Yet, Saint Chrysostom says that they were seen returning in crowds to the bosom of the Church. By blasphemy against the Son of man, the interpreters understand commonly the reproachful calumnies of the Jews, which only affected the humanity of the Saviour, for example, when they said that he loved good cheer and wine, that he favored sinners, &c., &c. These reproaches were always highly criminal. Still, because they only attacked directly his divinity, Jesus, the meekest of men, seems to account them as nothing, and is not unwilling to let it be known how ready he is to pardon them.

(7) Therefore, there is some remission in the other world; and the Protestants, who deny it, and who consequently reject purgatory and prayer for the dead, are refuted by this single saying.

(8) This expression decides what is the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is here in question. It is visibly that which the Pharisees committed, by attributing to the demon the works of Jesus Christ, which had the Spirit of God for author. I leave it to theologians to examine, if there be other sins against the Holy Ghost, what they are, and how many should be reckoned of this class. I content myself with remarking that, among the sins which are committed in the world, that which approaches nearest to the sin of the Pharisees, is to attribute to hypocrisy, or to any other vicious principle, the virtues of the saints, which the Spirit of God operates by his grace—a sin as common as it is enormous; but it remains for us to see in what sense it is said that it shall never be pardoned.

Saint Augustine, and, after him, the majority of interpreters, regard this passage as one of the most difficult to explain. The difficulty arises from the fact that the Church does not recognize any sins to be absolutely irremissible, and that this seems to be declared such. We are, therefore, forced to say, that when Jesus Christ assures that it shall never be pardoned, he does not advance any thing further than that the remission shall be more rare and more difficult. We agree that this mitigated interpretation is with difficulty adjusted to the strong and absolute expressions which the Saviour employs here. Nevertheless, we find, even in this passage, matter to justify it. Those who have asserted that sin or blasphemy against the Son of man is merely a venial sin, have asserted an absurdity: this sin is mortal and irremissible in its nature, whether in this world or in the other, if it be not expiated by penance. Yet Jesus Christ says simply and absolutely, that he shall be pardoned, *remittetur*. Does he wish to give us to understand that it shall be so always? No, but that it shall be so easily and so often, in comparison with the sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall, therefore, only be pardoned rarely, and with difficulty. In a word, Jesus Christ says absolutely of the sin against the Son of man, that it shall be pardoned, as he says absolutely of the sin against

Finally, inasmuch as the expulsion of the demons is evidently a good work, there exists only one more consequence to be drawn, viz., that Jesus Christ, the author of this, was good—that is to say, holy and irreprehensible, and that those who calumniated him so atrociously were wicked and corrupt. The Saviour did not leave these perverse men to remain ignorant of this. "Either make the tree good, he again said to them, and its fruit good; or make the tree evil, and its fruit evil; for by the fruit the tree is known. O, generation of vipers, how can you speak good things, whereas you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man, out of a good treasure, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of an evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things (9). But I say to you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it at the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The latter words of the Saviour give us to understand that the Pharisees reckoned as of little consequence the sins of the tongue; and those immediately preceding were meant to inform us how rigorously blasphemous words shall be punished at that exact and severe judgment, in which an idle word shall not remain unpunished.

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the Holy Ghost, that it shall not be pardoned. It does not occur to our mind to believe that the first shall be *always* pardoned; neither, therefore, should we conclude that the second shall *never* be pardoned.

(9) Habitually, and not always. See Note 9 of Chapter XVII., page 141. It is not necessary for the truth of moral propositions, that they should never suffer exceptions. They are true when the things are, generally speaking, such as these propositions announce.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SIGN OF JONAS.—THE NINIVITES.—THE QUEEN OF SABA.—THE EXPELLED DEMON ENTERS IN AGAIN.—EXCLAMATION OF A WOMAN.—THE MOTHER AND BRETHREN OF JESUS.—PARABLE OF THE SEED.

(*a*) "THEN some of the Scribes and Pharisees answering him, said: Master, we would see a sign." Apparently these petitioners were the same who had already asked him for a heavenly sign. Jesus had left them unanswered, because he should first reply to the odious accusation we have just spoken of. These inquisitive and artful men renewed the tempting solicitation, and (*b*) "the multitudes running together," to see the wonder they expected, "Jesus began to say: This generation is wicked and adulterous; it asketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet (1). For as Jonas was a sign to the Ninivites, so shall the Son of man also be to this generation. As *then* Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights (2), so

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 38. (*b*) St. Luke, xi. 29, 30; St. Matthew, xii. 40.

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(1) Jesus Christ refuses to them the miracle which they asked, and he promises one to them which they did not ask. Was it reasonable that the divine power should be subservient to their caprices, and that it should perform the miracles which they wished for, because they did not wish to yield submission, in consequence of those which it wrought? Yet, if we are even slightly acquainted with the genius of incredulity, we shall not hesitate to believe that they were highly puffed up after the refusal, and that they said more than once, and with an air of triumph: Why does he not work the miracle which is asked of him?

(2) Jesus Christ was not three entire days and three entire nights in the bosom of the earth; he only passed there one entire day and one entire night, with a part of two other days and of two other nights. It is in this sense it is said that he passed there three days and three nights. Here is the way in which this is explained. We must just reckon the entire day from midnight unto midnight. We do so thus: and although this was not the Jewish mode, it was that of the Egyptians, whom all people then regarded as legislators in astronomy, and that of the Romans, the masters of the world, and particularly of Judea, where it is natural to think that they partly introduced this usage, as well as in the other countries of their domination; for they dated, apparently, the public transactions according to their ordinary manner of reckoning the days. Sup-

shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth (3) three days and three nights."

This sign, more wonderful than that of Jonas, since it is more wonderful to come forth alive from the bosom of the earth, after having entered it dead, than to come forth alive from a fish, which a living man had entered—this sign, I say, according to God's intention, was to be for the Jews a sign of conviction and salvation; but because Jesus Christ foresaw that their incredulity would render it useless, he proposes it to them here as a sign of judgment and of condemnation, the equity and rigor of which are justified with regard to them by the example of the Ninivites. He proceeds, therefore, as follows: (*a*) "The men of Ninive shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas here. The Queen of the South shall rise in judgment with this generation, and

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 41–45; St. Luke, xi. 24, 26.

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posing this to be the case, there exist no longer any difficulties. Jesus Christ, having died on Friday at three o'clock, after mid-day, and being almost immediately taken down from the cross, may have been laid in the tomb before sunset, which was then after six o'clock. This is the more likely, as the repose of the festival, which obliged the Jews to suspend their work, commenced at sunset. Thus Jesus Christ shall have passed in the bosom of the earth the part of the day which remained from his deposition in the sepulchre until sunset. From sunset until midnight there are about six hours of the night which belong to Friday. We therefore have already part of a day, and of the night of Friday, passed in the tomb. The Saturday does not puzzle us. As to Sunday, we have firstly, the part of the night which commenced at midnight, when Saturday closed; and as to the day, although it be held that the Lord rose before sunrise, he may not have risen until the day gleamed with sufficient light to enable us to say truly that it was day. And that period of light, or day, passed in the tomb, if it were only to have lasted for a moment, suffices to enable us to say with truth that he was there upon *the day* of Sunday.

(3) There is in the Latin text *in corde terra*, in *the heart* of the earth: this word is usually understood with reference to the bosom of the earth, in which the body of the Lord was inclosed. Yet as this is the only passage where Scripture makes use of this mode of speech to express a sepulchre, and as, besides, the Hebrew phrase also signifies the centre of the earth, an expression too strong for the sepulchres, which we may say were only on the surface, Catholic interpreters have thought, with reason, that it should also be understood with reference to Limbo, whither the holy soul of the Saviour descended immediately after his death. Saint Paul has said, in the same sense, that Jesus Christ descended *into the lower parts of the earth* (Ephes. iv.). This truth is of faith; it forms a part of the Apostles' Creed, and we do not see upon what grounds, nor for what reason Protestants insist on rejecting it.

shall condemn it: because she came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon here."

It was on the occasion of a man being possessed by the demon that Jesus said all this. He closes by a sort of parable, in which, under the figure of a man repossessed after deliverance, he announces to the Jews the increase of their crimes, and the excess of their future misfortunes. "When the unclean spirit," said he to them, "is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and not finding, he saith: I will return into my house whence I came out; and coming, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then he goeth, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself. They enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. So shall it be also to this wicked generation."

There are several ways of explaining this parable, but we pass them over to confine ourselves to its clear signification. This is, that the Jewish nation, so often criminal and so often penitent, having again given entrance to the demon by its outrageous contempt for the person of the Saviour, his doctrine and his miracles, shall again become more criminal and more unfortunate than it had ever been before. The event too truly justified the prophecy, and the application tested by every day's experience, in the case of relapsing sinners, is but too highly justified by experience.

(*a*) "As he spoke these things it came to pass, a certain woman from the crowd lifting up her voice," midst the murmuring of the Pharisees, "said to him: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck." She envied, as is usual with those of her sex, the happiness of her who had brought into the world a man so wonderful, and wished that herself could have been that happy mother. Jesus Christ instructed her, by informing her that there was a happiness preferable even to that of such an exalted maternity, and consoled her by giving her to understand that she could procure for herself this happiness. "Yea, rather," he said, "blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it." This expression was not meant to depreciate that inestimable happiness which the

(*a*) St. Luke, xi. 27, 28.

mother of God has foretold in her canticle should be celebrated by all the nations of the earth. Much less did it convey that the Blessed Virgin had not cherished the word of God, or failed to practise it herself. The expression merely denoted how preferable was the happiness of her fidelity to that of her maternity: that her fidelity surpasses in point of fact her maternity, inasmuch as she would not have been the happiest of all creatures, if she had not been the most faithful.

This was the moment which the Son of God had chosen to establish that great maxim, that by perfect observance of the law of God, we unite ourselves to him by closer and stronger ties than those of flesh and blood. To imprint it still more deeply on the mind, he contrived the following transaction, which furnished him with an occasion to repeat it. (*a*) "As he was yet speaking to the multitudes, his mother and his brethren (4) stood without, wishing to speak to him. They could not come at him for the crowd. Standing without, they sent unto him, wishing to speak to him. The multitude

(*a*) St. Matthew, xii. 46–49, 50; St. Luke, viii. 19; St. Mark, iii. 31–33.

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(4) Those who would say that after the birth of Jesus Christ the Blessed Virgin had several children by Saint Joseph, who are here called the brothers of the Lord, would renew the heresy of the infamous Helvidius, who was victoriously opposed by Saint Jerome. The Greeks, and among the Latins, Saint Hilarius and Saint Ambrose, who are followed on this point by some moderns, have thought that the brothers of the Lord were children of Saint Joseph, born from a first wife, whom he had before he married the Blessed Virgin. Saint Jerome has also refuted this opinion, and the perpetual virginity of the holy husband of Mary is recognized at the present day by the common belief of the faithful. It is not, nevertheless, an article of faith, although the Cardinal Peter Damien seems to assert it in a letter which he wrote to Pope Nicholas II. We, therefore, should believe that the brothers of the Lord were only his cousins. Four of them are known to us—James the Lesser, Joseph, Jude or Thaddeus, and Simon. Saint Matthew says expressly that the two first were the sons of Mary, the wife of Cleophas, or of Alpheus, supposing that these two names belong to the same man; or, if they be two different men, the daughter of one and wife of the other. Now, this Mary is called by Saint John sister of the mother of Jesus, which no longer leaves us in ignorance of the sense in which her sons might have been called the brothers of the Lord. Those who do not wish to allow that Saint Joachim and Saint Anne have had other children besides the Blessed Virgin, say that Mary of Cleophas was her aunt, or her cousin-german. Be it so. This belief is pious, and Scripture may have employed here the name of sister, as it makes use of that of brothers with regard to those who were only the cousins of the Saviour.

who sat about him say unto him: Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, seeking thee. Answering them, he said: Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And looking round about on them who sat about him, and stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he saith: Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and my sister, and my mother (5)."

We shall add to what we have already said, that this instruction was not for Mary, who was too enlightened to be ignorant of the truth it comprises, too humble to think of valuing herself upon her maternity, and, at the same time, too faithful an observer of the will of the heavenly Father, to require any other prop or stay. These words had reference, therefore, to the other relatives of the Saviour, and to all the Jewish nation. The former, for the most part, did not yet believe in him; the majority of the nation were never to believe in him; and it was proper that all should have notice that his relatives and fellow-citizens, if incredulous and prevaricating, should become strangers to the new alliance, and that, by the merit of an active and submissive faith, strangers would be judged worthy of being admitted in their place.

(*a*) "Again, when a great multitude was gathered together, and hastened out of the cities to Jesus, the same day, he going out of the house, sat by the sea-side, and began to teach. And great multitudes were gathered unto him, so that he went up into a boat, and sat in the sea, and all the multitude was upon the land by the sea-side. He taught them many things in parables, and said unto them, in his doctrine: Hear ye. The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and the birds of the air came and ate it up. And others fell upon stony ground, where it had not much earth, and it shot up immediately, because it had no depth of earth; but when the sun was up, it was scorched, and

(*a*) St. Luke, viii. 4–6; St. Matthew, xiii. 1; St. Mark, iv. 1–9.

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(5) By faith we become, says Saint Gregory, the brethren of Jesus Christ; but a person becomes in some manner his mother, by whose preaching Jesus Christ is formed in the heart of his audience, according to this expression of Saint Paul: *My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you* (Galatians, iv. 19).

withered away, because it had no root and no moisture. And some fell among thorns; the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. Some fell upon good ground, grew up and increased; and they yielded fruit, some one hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, and some thirty-fold. Saying these things, he cried out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

(*a*) "And when he was alone, the twelve that were with him asked him *the sense of* this parable, and said to him," on this subject: "Why speakest thou to them in parables? Because, he answered, to you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven; but to them that are without, all things are done in parables (6); for he that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall abound: but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away that also which he hath. Therefore do I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not (7), and hearing, they hear not; neither

(*a*) St. Mark, iv. 10, 11, 12; St. Matthew, xiii. 10–17; St. Luke, viii. 10, x. 24; St. Matthew, xiii. 13.

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(6) Saint Augustine assigns as the reason for this difference, that the first were predestined, and the latter reprobate. The reason has not been admitted by the majority of ancient and modern interpreters; and, in point of fact, Judas, one of the twelve, was reprobate, and it is not credible, that among the multitude, to whom Jesus Christ spoke only in parables, there was not some of the elect. The reason of the preference given to the first over the second should be taken from their actual disposition. The good use which the first made of the lights that were communicated to them, deserved for them an increase thereof, and the latter deserved the diminution, on account of the abuse or the little use they made thereof. This explanation appears to be that of Jesus Christ himself, who presently adds: *For he that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall abound: but he that hath not,* that is to say, who hath a little, *from him shall be taken away that also which he hath,* that is to say, the little which he hath. This saying, repeated in several passages of the Gospel, has everywhere the same sense.

(7) We give here the translation of Saint Matthew. Saint Mark and Saint Luke, when reporting the same words, make a remarkable difference. Instead of saying, *because* seeing they see not, they make the Saviour say, *that* seeing they may not see; that is to say, that the first gives their preceding blindness as cause of the withdrawal of light, and that the two others give the withdrawal of light as cause of their subsequent blindness. Both are true. Jesus Christ makes use, in their regard, of the veil of parables, because they had not wished to open their eyes to the pure and sparkling light of his miracles and of his doctrine, exposed in all its simplicity and all its clearness; and because he made use, in their regard, of the veil of parables, they should see much less than they had previously seen. Nevertheless, the intention of Jesus Christ was not to leave them absolutely without light: parables were not necessary for this; his silence

do they understand. And the prophecy of Isaias is fulfilled in them, who saith: By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive, for the heart of this people is grown gross: with their ears they have been dull of hearing, and their eyes they have shut, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. For, amen, I say to you, many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them."

Then, reverting to the explanation which they asked, "Jesus saith to them: Are you ignorant of this parable? And how shall you know all parables? Hear you, therefore, the parable of the sower (8): The seed is the word of God; he that soweth, soweth the word; they by the wayside, where the word is sown, are they that hear. As soon as they have heard, immediately Satan cometh, and taketh out the word that was sown in their hearts, lest believing, they should be saved (9). And they that received the seed upon stony ground, are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root in themselves. They believe for a while (10); and then, when tribulation and persecution ariseth

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would have sufficed: he only wished to diminish the lights; and what, in point of fact, is a parable, but a light shrouded in a cloud, which covers it in part, and which lets it be partly seen?

(8) The parable, and the explanation which follows, would be only a useless speculation, if this saying of Saint Augustine were not true: *Each individual renders himself good or bad ground*—good, by the good use of grace; bad, by the abuse of liberty, which ever retains the power to use or not to use grace.

(9) There is scarcely any appearance that the divine word fructifieth, when it falls upon a heart as badly prepared as is a high-road to receive the seed of the laborer. Still it hath a virtue, regarding which the demon is ever uneasy. A word heard by chance has produced more than once the most abundant and the most unhoped-for fruits. Satan is not unaware of this; and, to make sure of his aim, he hurries to snatch away this seed, which might be already regarded as lost.

(10) They believed, therefore, and on their part it was not hypocrisy. We agree that they were cowards! let us not say that they were deceitful or perfidious. When sin is manifest, we must desire to justify the guilty; but justice does not permit to make him more guilty than he is, and charity inclines rather to exaggerate them.

because of the word, they are presently scandalized, and in time of temptation, they fall away. That which fell amongst thorns, are they who have heard the word; but the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches (11), the pleasures of this life, and the lusts after other things, entering in, choke the word, and it is made fruitless (12). But that on the good ground, are they who hear the word in a good, and a very good heart, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience, the one thirty *to one*, another sixty, and another a hundred."

Yet, this explanation which Jesus Christ gave to the apostles alone, was not destined only for them, but was to be communicated by them to all nations. They were the lamps which the Father of the family was trimming, and setting, and lighting, in order that they might one day illumine his entire house, that is, his Church. This is what Jesus Christ gives them to understand, by repeating those words which he had already said on another occasion: (*a*) "No man, lighting a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it upon a candlestick, that they who come in may see the light. For," added he, speaking of the shining publicity which the doctrine he then explained to them in secrecy should one day have, "there is not any thing secret that shall not be made manifest, nor hidden that shall not be known and come abroad."

(*a*) St. Mark, iv. 21–23; St. Luke, viii. 16–18.

He who abandons persecuted truth may only be weak; but if he combines with those who persecute it, he is perfidious.

(11) It might be translated *the deceitful riches.* They are so principally, inasmuch as they promise a felicity which they do not give. We think that in doubling our store we shall double our happiness: that expectation is never realized, and it often happens in the exact reverse: increase of riches generally brings increase of care and trouble.

(12) There are three sorts of hearers with whom the divine word produces no fruit. 1st. Those who pay no attention to it, or whose entire attention is limited to hearing it as the word of man. 2d. Those whose mind is attentive, but whose heart is not disposed to put it in practice. 3d. Those whose mind is attentive, and whose heart is well disposed, but who, instead of meditating when they have heard it, deliver themselves up to the cares and distractions of the world. In the first class it produces nothing; in the second it produces words; and the fruits which it produces in the third class are almost immediately stifled when formed. Three opposite dispositions make it fructify—attention, *good-will,* recollection, and meditation.

But as this prophecy, the accomplishment of which was to be confided to their care, was not yet as clear to them as it subsequently was, Jesus warned them to meditate on the sense thereof: "If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear."

And, to awaken their attention further, "he said to them: Take heed, therefore, what you hear. In what measure you shall mete it shall be measured to you again, and more shall be given to you for he that hath, to him shall be given; but whosoever hath not that also which he thinketh he hath shall be taken away." This was not the first time that Jesus Christ gave them to understand these two truths; but, when applied to the existing circumstances, they became to the apostles a powerful exhortation to diffuse abundantly the lights he had communicated to them, persuaded that the diffusion of these lights would merit for them an increase thereof, whereas they would be withdrawn from him who attempted to withhold them from others.

CHAPTER XXII.

PARABLES OF THE COCKLE, OF THE MUSTARD-SEED, OF THE LEAVEN, AND OF THE NET CAST INTO THE SEA.—PREACHING OF JESUS CHRIST AT NAZARETH.—PROPHET WITHOUT HONOR IN HIS OWN COUNTRY.

WHETHER what follows was spoken on another day, or whether, which does not appear unlikely, after having conversed for some time apart with his disciples, Jesus began again immediately to address the multitude: (*a*) "He proposed to them another parable, saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and sowed cockle among the wheat, and went away. And when the blade was sprung up, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle. The servants of the good man of the house coming, said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field?

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiii. 24–30.

Whence, then, hath it cockle? And he said to them: An enemy hath done this. The servants said to him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up? No, he said, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it (1). Suffer both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers (2): Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn; but the wheat gather ye into my barn."

Without pausing then for the explanation of this parable, which his disciples desired, but which they would not venture to ask their Divine Master for fear of interrupting him, (*a*) "Jesus" continued, and "said: So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, the seed should spring and grow up night and day whilst he knoweth not (3):

(*a*) St. Mark, iv. 26–29.

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(1) Wherefore, if it were evident that, in gathering the cockle, we should not root up the wheat, we should gather it, since the father of the family gives no other reason for leaving it. Another consequence.—Therefore the *doubt alone*, whether if, when gathering the cockle, we may not root up the wheat, obliges us to leave it, since the father of the family does not say absolutely, *You should root up the wheat*, but *lest perhaps* you may root it up. In the application we oftener meet doubt than evidence to the contrary, and the cases in which the cockle should be left are much more common than those in which it must be prematurely gathered. Note that it is on account of the wheat that the cockle is spared, and not upon its own account; if we let it grow, it is only to cast it into the fire.

(2) The reapers seem distinguished from the servants; the first are the angels, according to the Saviour's explanation. As he does not say who the servants are, we may be permitted to seek it, and it is natural to think that they are the ministers of his Church. Those whom he speaks of here are not altogether faultless. The *sleepers* give to the enemy time and opportunity to sow the cockle. The *ardent* would root it up immediately when it appeared. These faults are not so opposite that they may not be met with in the same persons. We may be too fond of sleeping, and not be overwise when we awake. May we not also say that this great zeal was the consequence of negligence? The mischief had occurred through their fault; hence their vexation and their impatient desire to root it up.

(3) Jesus Christ was never really to abandon his Church; but would appear to abandon it when, ascending to heaven, he should deprive it of his sensible presence. The state of apparent weakness in which he left it might make his disciples apprehend lest it should disappear with its founder, and that the epoch of its birth was only that of its ruin. Jesus Christ teaches them here that the seed of the word, being once cast by his divine hands, shall not fall in vain upon that blessed earth; and that when he shall appear to be the least occupied concerning it, they shall see it grow and ripen before their eyes, as

For the earth of itself bringeth forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear (4): and when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Two other parables directly followed this one, and the three have the same object, viz., the Church of Jesus Christ, hidden at first like seed in the bosom of the earth, but afterwards making its appearance, and by imperceptible degrees arriving at maturity: small as the mustard-seed, which springs up above all the vegetable tribe, and whose tall stem almost equals the height of the trees; or like paste, whose size is considerably increased by a little leaven. Here they are as pronounced by the Saviour. He said then to them further: (*a*) "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God, or to what parable shall we compare it? The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the least of all the seeds that are in the earth; but, when it is sown, it groweth up and becometh greater than all the herbs; and shooteth out great branches, so that the birds of the air may dwell under the shadow thereof." He spoke to them, in few words, the other parable: (*b*) "The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened. Jesus spoke all these things in parables to the multitude. With many such parables he spoke to them the *evangelical* word, according as they were able to hear." For this simple style, which merely presented to them those images with which they were familiar, was most on a level with their minds, and the mist in which

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiii. 31–33; St. Mark, iv. 30–32.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xiii. 33–35; St. Mark, iv. 33, 34.

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the wheat which the laborer has sown in the field grows without his putting a hand near it. It is true, that the inaction of the latter is real, and that of Jesus is only apparent; for he alone giveth growth to the seed by the secret, but real and always active, virtue of his grace. Wherefore it is merely under the aspect of appearances that they are here compared to one another.

(4) Grace has its progression as well as nature, imperceptible from day to day, but perceptible from time to time. We cannot too earnestly desire its growth, but we should know how to await it. Precocious fruits do not ripen; and a stem when too luxuriant exhausts itself and withers.

these figures partly shrouded truths, the full blaze of which the people could not endure, proportioned the light to their present capacity. (*a*) "*Therefore* without parables Jesus did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world; but apart he explained all things to his disciples."

"Having sent away the multitudes, he came into the house, and his disciples came to him, saying: Expound to us the parable of the cockle of the field. Jesus made answer and saith to them: He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man. The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the cockle are the children of the wicked one (5). The enemy that sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The reapers are the angels. Even, therefore, as cockle is gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

After the exposition of this parable, Jesus proceeded to propose some others to his disciples. Since he wished that their understanding of them should be the fruit of their close attention, he warns them according to his custom: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;" afterwards he continues to speak thus: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field: which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes: which, when

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiii. 36–52.

(5) The wicked can become good. If they do not become such, they serve at least to exercise and perfect the good. These are two reasons for which Saint Augustine says that God suffers them to remain on earth.

it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from the just (6), and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The bad fish caught with the good in the same net, and the cockle sowed with the good seed in the same field, are two different images of one and the same thing. That is, in the profession of the same faith and in the bosom of the same Church, the mixture of the wicked with the good during this life, and the separation to be made at the end of the world. The apostles, to whom Jesus Christ had just explained the first of these two parables, had no difficulty in comprehending the second. The two which precede the first of these have another object, viz., the inestimable value of the evangelical doctrine, and the profound wisdom of the man who sacrifices all that he has to insure its possession to himself. These latter parables are so clear, that it was not requisite to explain them for the disciples. Wherefore, when Jesus Christ said to them: (*a*) "Have ye understood all these things? Yes, they say to him. Therefore," added he, wishing to teach them, by a new figure, the use they should make of the treasures wherewith he had enriched them, "therefore every Scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like to a man who is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old," in order that all his household may be abundantly provided.

"When Jesus had finished these parables, he passed from thence and came to Nazareth, his own country, where he was brought up; and his disciples followed him. When the Sabbath-day was come, Jesus went into the synagogue, according to his custom, and began to teach. He rose up to read. The book of Isaias the prophet was delivered to him, and as he unfolded the book, he found the place where it is written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (7); where-

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiii. 51–54; St. Luke, iv. 16–21; St. Mark, vi. 1, 2.

(6) This eternal separation of the wicked from the good, followed, for the latter, by eternal happiness, and for the others by eternal misfortune, explains in one word all that we might be inclined to reckon inexplicable in the conduct of Providence.

(7) He found there what he wished to find. There is nothing chance to him who knows every thing.

fore he hath anointed me (8) to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart (9); to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward (10). When he had folded the book, he restored it to the minister, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him, and he began to say to them: This day is fulfilled this Scripture in your ears."

That decisive announcement, which was to them who heard it an abstract of all the discourses which Jesus Christ had hitherto made unto them, and which in a twinkling brought them all thronging back on their recollection, made at the outset a great impression on the whole assembly. But, by one of those strange revolutions which we sometimes see occurring in the public mind, they passed immediately from admiration to envy—from envy to contempt, slander, incredulity, and, at last, to a transport of fury. "All gave [*then at first*] testimony to him, and they wondered at the words of grace

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(8) Invisible unction—operated by the Holy Ghost, who diffused himself with all his gifts into the holy humanity of the Saviour at the moment of his incarnation. Regal and sacerdotal unction—by which he has been consecrated monarch of the universe, and eternal pontiff of the new law. Thus, although he has not received the material and sensible sign thereof, Jesus Christ is very truly said to have received the unction (expressed by the name of Christ), because he received the effect of it in all its plenitude, and in a degree of excellence infinitely superior to that received by all those to whom the same name is given in Scripture.

(9) This prophecy had partly its accomplishment in the miracles which Jesus Christ has wrought to cure corporal evils. But, to reach its perfect sense, we should understand it with reference to the sad effects of sin in souls, and the powerful remedies which Jesus Christ was capable of bringing to bear upon them, and which he actually did.

(10) We read in the text, *the day of reward—diem retributionis.* It is generally understood of the last judgment; and what further favors this explanation is, that this day, which is here called the *day of reward,* is called by Isaiah the day of vengeance—*dies ultiones.* Yet it has been remarked that Jesus Christ, after having read the prophecy, adds presently: *This day is fulfilled this Scripture in your ears.* Therefore some conclude that the allusion here was not to the last judgment, and they consequently call the day of reward the day of liberality and of grace. This explanation appears to them the more natural, as *the day of reward* is to be found placed immediately after *the acceptable year of the Lord.* All this is more specious than solid. Jesus Christ hath come to announce present mercy and the judgment to come: the *prophet,* that he shall preach both one and the other. It is not necessary for him to judge actually in order to accomplish the prophecy—the preaching of it is sufficient.

that proceeded from his mouth, and they said: How came this man by all these things? and what wisdom is this that is given to him, and such mighty works are wrought by his hands?"

But a moment before, and they spoke the language of admiration. Now it is that of envy, contempt, spite, and scandal. "Is not this," added they, "is not this the carpenter? Is not this the carpenter's son (11), the son of Joseph, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph, Simon and Jude? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence, therefore, hath he all these things? And they were scandalized in his regard."

Yet, Jesus had worked but few miracles at Nazareth, and those few had but little lustre. He who was prodigal of them elsewhere, seemed parsimonious of them with regard to his fellow-citizens. This was for reasons worthy of his wisdom. He was willing to explain them to these people; but, as his miracles were apparently the principal subject of their great eagerness to see him, being deceived on this point, they no longer valued his reasons, and spite drove them to extreme violence against his person. These are the words which gave occasion to this outbreak: (*a*) "He said to them *then:* Doubtless you will say to me this similitude: Physician, heal thyself. As great things as we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy own country (12). Amen, I say to you," added he,

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiii. 57; St. Luke, iv. 23, 24.

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(11) In Latin, *faber*. This word signifies a tradesman or an artisan, without determining the sort of work—only it excludes delicate workmanship. It therefore leaves undecided the trade in which he was engaged during the thirty years of his hidden life. Some have said that it was masonry; others, that he worked at an iron forge. The most universal and most ancient opinion is, that Jesus Christ exercised with Saint Joseph the trade of carpenter. Now, that God should draw forth a prophet from the shop of a carpenter, was what the Nazarenes never could persuade themselves. They would have no difficulty in believing him, if God had drawn him forth from some famous academy; for the principle of their incredulity was constantly this: God cannot make a prophet out of a carpenter. Reduce back all unbelievers to their first principle, you will find nothing more weighty than this assertion—it is always, God cannot do it.

(12) The consideration which we procure for ourselves in our own country is a much more precious acquisition, and, in some way, more properly our own, than what we acquire among strangers. Such, at least, is the opinion of men, which is sufficient to justify the application that the Saviour here makes of the proverb: *Physician, heal thyself.*

"no prophet is accepted in his own country. He is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house."

Wherefore, he cannot work many miracles there; for where there is but little consideration for his person, little faith could be placed in his words. Now miracles, which are usually the reward of faith, must not be lavished on incredulity. And to show that such had been, at all times, the conduct of God, (*a*) "In truth," pursues the Saviour, "in truth I say to you: There were many widows in the days of Elias in Israel, when heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there was a great famine throughout all the earth: and to none of them was Elias sent, but to Sarepta of Sidon, to a widow woman. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed but Naaman, the Syrian."

Thus they should not expect to be more highly favored than the Israelites then were; and Jesus Christ gave them sufficiently to understand that the fault was their own. Why did they not correct themselves, if they sought to be better treated? And, since disdain for his person, and incredulity to the words of him whom they should at least regard as the messenger of God, rendered them unworthy of the favor of heaven, why did they not strive to render themselves worthy by listening to him with docility and respect? It was to bring them to this point that Jesus Christ spoke to them after this fashion. But there are always perverse hearts, who turn remedies into poison, and grace itself into a stumbling-block and a rock of scandal. The truth which should light up intelligence in their minds served only to complete their blindness. On hearing these words, "all they in the synagogue hearing these things, were filled with anger. They rose up *on the instant*, and thrust him out of the city." They sought not merely to banish him; their fury went so far as to attempt his life. "That they might cast him down headlong (13), they brought him to the brow of the hill

(*a*) St. Luke, iv. 25–30.

(13) Saint Ambrose and Bede judge them more culpable than those who crucified the Saviour, because the latter preserved, at least, the form of justice, whereas those of Nazareth followed without any form the motions of a brutal fury. We hazard the opin-

whereon their city was built. But Jesus, passing through the midst of them, went his way," at a moderate pace, without seeming to fear them, and without receiving any hurt. Whether he diffused a mist before their eyes to hinder them from seeing him, or whether he bound their hands by invisible chains—take it either way, it must have been a miracle; but it was almost the only one he wrought in his own country. "For," adds the sacred text, (*a*) "he could not do any miracle there (14), on account of their unbelief, only that he

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiii. 58; St. Mark, vi. 5, 6.

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ion, contrary to their view, that the crime is more enormous where there is more reflection, and that, comparing these two attempts, one is murder, and the other assassination; besides, that the most criminal injustice is that which clothes itself in the form of justice.

(14) Not if we merely contemplate his absolute power, but with respect to the rational exercise of power, and consistently with a certain order which his wisdom has freely established, from which he may deviate when it pleaseth him, but from which he very rarely does deviate. We have already seen that, according to this order, God, generally speaking, grants miracles to faith, and refuses them to incredulity. The latter will perhaps ask if that be not tantamount to saying that miracles are accorded to credulity, and that they are refused to enlightened and diffident reason. It is a sufficient answer, that this conduct of God is highly worthy, and good sense alone tells us that graces should be measured out according to the use which is made of them, and that, consequently, they should be redoubled for those who profit by them, and be retrenched from those who abuse them. The inhabitants of Nazareth belong to the latter class. Jesus Christ had wrought some miracles among them, and rumor had informed them of those which he had wrought at Capharnaum. This was enough to make them believe; and had they believed, having this sufficient proof, prodigies would have been multiplied in their favor. But, by not believing, they deserved that Jesus Christ should in some manner weaken this proof in their regard, very far from fortifying it. We should say the same thing with reference to the miracles upon which religion is founded. They form, for every straightforward and impartial mind, a more than sufficient proof. God will not perform other miracles for those who do not believe; and he will perform them for those who already believe. On his part, this is goodness towards the latter, and justice with regard to the others. And, when I say that God will perform fresh miracles, I suppose, what is true, that miracles have never ceased in the Church. They have been wrought in the Church from its birth, and they shall be wrought in it until the consummation of ages. The verbal process of canonizations is a judicial and incontestable proof for all the period which has elapsed since that period when these proceedings commenced—the very period with reference to which doubts might more readily be entertained as to the gift of miracles having remained in the Church. But it has been remarked, and we may again remark, that miracles follow faith; that is to say, that the more faith there is, the more miracles there are, and that the source of miracles is almost entirely dried up in places where faith is dead or dying. Thus, incredulity in mir-

cured a few that were sick, laying his hands upon them; and he wondered because of their unbelief." He who had wondered at the faith of a Gentile, found in his fellow-citizens a prodigy of infidelity capable of causing him equal surprise. These two prodigies are daily renewed—that of faith to an heroic pitch amongst barbarous nations at the first glimmerings they descry of evangelical truth; and, in the bosom of Christianity, the prodigy of incredulity rising to downright personal hatred of Jesus Christ, and the most furious demonstrations against his religion and its ministers.

These proceedings, which obliged the Saviour to quit his ungrateful country, were unable to repress his zeal. True, he abandoned to their reprobate senses these self-blinded individuals, who had passed the sentence upon themselves, that they were unworthy of the eternal life which his mercy had come to offer them. But it was only to seek elsewhere minds more docile and hearts better disposed. (*a*) "He went about all the cities and towns, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity. And, seeing the multitudes" of people who crowded to him from all parts, "he had compassion on them, because they were distressed, and lying like sheep that have no shepherd."

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 35, 36.

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acles is the cause of the withdrawal of miracles, and the mystery of the parables was in punishment of incredulity of the doctrine which had been so publicly promulgated. The conduct of God sustains itself, and all his judgments are justified.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MISSION OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.—INSTRUCTIONS AND ADVICE THAT JESUS GIVES THEM.

(*a*) "THEN he saith to his disciples: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he send forth laborers into his harvest." We cannot rationally doubt the execution of this order, or that all the disciples made the prayer prescribed by their Divine Master. It could not fail to be heard, since he who was to hear it was no other than he who invited them to make the petition. (*b*) "Then calling together his twelve apostles, he gave them power and authority over all devils, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases, and all manner of infirmities. He began to send them two and two," in order that they might aid one another, and that there might be everywhere two witnesses to the same truth. "The names of the twelve apostles are these"—as we have seen before, yet they are ranged here in an order somewhat different from the first, and we believe from that in which they were associated. "The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the publican; James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanean, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Jesus."

(*c*) "He commanded them that they should take nothing for the way but a staff only:" even this they were merely to make use of for a support, for we shall presently see that he did not allow them to make use of it for self-defence. This explains the apparent contradiction of the staff now allowed and now forbidden. In addition, he enjoined upon them "that they should take no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse, but to be shod with sandals, and that they should not put on two coats." An unwavering confidence in Providence was to be then substituted for all these provisions. But w:

(*a*) St. Matthew, ix. 37, 38.
(*b*) St. Luke, ix. 1, 2; St. Matthew, x. 1; St. Mark, vi. 7.
(*c*) St. Mark, vi. 8, 9

must hear, from the very lips of the Saviour, the admirable regulations which he gave to them, and, in their persons, to their successors in the apostolic ministry; for they equally regard the latter, excepting the first, which even may also serve to teach them that they ought not to go elsewhere than whither they are sent, and that if it be criminal to preach without a mission, it would also be a crime to step ever so little beyond its prescribed bounds.

(*a*) "Jesus commanded his apostles, saying: Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and going, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. Freely have you received, freely give. Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff." Be assured, however, that no necessary shall be wanting to you, "for the workman is worthy of his meat. Into whatever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; there abide, until you go thence (1). When you go into the house, salute it, saying: Peace be to this house; and if that house be worthy, your peace shall come upon it; but if it be not worthy, your peace shall return to you (2). Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, going forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony to them (3). Amen, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city."

This advice might suffice to the apostles for this first mission; it was to be rather brief: no persecution awaited them there, and it was merely a slight essay of those missions, wherein, cross in hand,

(*a*) St. Matthew, x. 5; St. Mark, vi. 11.

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(1) It is said in Saint Luke: *And whatsoever house you shall enter into, abide there, and depart not from thence.* There would be levity in doing so without reason, or a delicacy very unbecoming in an apostle, if done from the hope of better treatment; and whatever was the motive, the host thus left would certainly have cause to complain.

(2) The good that you have wished them shall come to pass in one way or the other.

(3) Dust on the feet is the proof of the journey; and to shake off this dust was, on the part of the apostles, equivalent to saying: We are come, and you have not wished to receive us. This is the way in which that action rendered testimony against the inhabitants

they should confront all the powers of the universe, and, without other weapons than patience, range all people under the law of the Master, who sent them. As yet, they were incapable of the latter missions, because they were not yet "clad with virtue from on high." Still, before he imparted to them strength for these, he wishes to convey to them a knowledge of them, and he proceeds to do so by the following words, rapidly sketching before their eyes the terrible picture of the combats they should have to endure, they and their first disciples; for we have in this picture an historical sketch of the three first ages of the Church. This prophetic picture could not be otherwise than highly useful to each and every one amongst them. Besides, as it contained instructions relative to the various trials through which they were to pass, by seeing that they were foretold, the apostles would be less surprised, and less alarmed when they came upon them; and the accomplishment of this part of the prophecy guarantied the truth of those passages which announced their victories and their crowns. Hence the Saviour continues thus:

(*a*) "Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents and simple as doves (4). But beware of men" (meaning those whom he has just called wolves). "For they will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and before kings for my sake, for a testimony (5) to them and to the Gentiles. But when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what to speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak.

(*a*) St. Matthew, x. 16–42.

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(4) Meekness and simplicity are the primary virtues which Jesus Christ prescribes to the apostles. They should neither oppose force to violence nor wiles to malice. The prudence of the serpent considerably perplexes the commentators. We know that this animal has a lively and piercing glance. It is natural to think that Jesus Christ enjoins his disciples to be clear-sighted like the serpent, in order to discover the snares of their enemies, and to avoid them by flight or by concealment; for he leaves them no other means of defending themselves against them.

(5) Much more by the testimony of blood than by that of speech. This it was which caused the name of *martyrs*, which signifies *witnesses*, to be given to them who sealed with their blood the truths of the Gospel. For *if there be no greater love than to give one's life for those whom we love*, there is no stronger persuasion than to shed our blood in support of our cause.

For it is not you that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Moreover, it is not merely on the part of your fellow-citizens that you shall encounter so violent a persecution. "The brother also shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the son: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and shall put them to death; and you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake: but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved."

Meantime, Jesus Christ, who wishes that his disciples should be intrepid under the sword of persecution, would not that an indiscreet zeal should thrust them under its blows. Wherefore, he adds, "When they shall persecute you in this city (6), flee into another (7). Amen, I say unto you: You shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the Son of man come (8)."

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(6) Persecution is an equivocal sign of truth or virtue. The wicked suffer it as well as the good, the Jews as well as the Christians, heretics as well as Catholics, and ranters as well as apostles. Happy those who, like the latter, suffer it for justice! *It is not the pain, it is the cause which makes the martyr.*—Saint Augustine.

(7) Flight was not merely allowed the apostles, it was prescribed to them: it preserved to the growing Church her first pastors, and, by dispersing them, it was instrumental to the propagation of the Gospel. In subsequent times it has been commanded or permitted, or forbidden according to circumstances. It is even commanded to the pastor, when his presence would more injure the Church than his absence: it is permitted to him, when the persecution is levelled against him alone, and that his ministry can be easily supplied by others: it is prohibited to him when his flock would in consequence thereof encounter notable damage. This is the case wherein he must give his life for his flock. It rarely occurs that flight is prohibited to those who are not pastors, and it is commanded to them, when the knowledge they have of their weakness makes them apprehend that they may fall under the effect of persecution: in this case we should prefer our own salvation to that of others.

(8) Several interpreters think that these words were said to the apostles; others contend that they regard those amongst their successors who shall preach the Gospel in the time of Anti-Christ. According to the first interpretation, the coming of the Son of man should be understood with reference to the destruction of Jerusalem; according to the second, what are here called the cities of Israel are the Christian cities which, at the end of the world, shall have apostatized from the faith, and shall persecute its preachers: each interpretation has its difficulties. Nevertheless, as these difficulties are less than those which are to be met in the other ways of explaining this text, the most probable thing we can say here is, that each of these interpretations is the correct one. In the first case, the prophecy must have been understood by the apostles; in the second case, it shall be understood at the end of ages; in either case, Jesus Christ shall not have made it in vain. For as we have already remarked, although nothing is useless in Scripture, it does not, therefore, follow that all therein should be equally useful for all times.

If he announces to them great sufferings, he presents to them at the same time great motives. Of these his own example is the first. "The disciple," said he, "is not above the Master, nor the servant above the Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household." We may conceive that this motive had much greater force, when men's rage, passing from words to the most sanguinary deeds, had fastened to the cross the Master and the Lord. "Therefore fear them not," said the Saviour, "for," despite the fury of the world, "nothing is covered" in the doctrine which I teach you "that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known. That which I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light: and that which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the house-tops (9)."

God alone is to be feared, and he shields them with his almighty protection: new motives of confidence, which the Saviour proposes in these words: "Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul (10). But rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body into hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore: better are ye than many sparrows." Lastly, gathering into one focus what must form the main objects of their desires and of their fear: "Every one, *said he*, that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven; but he that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven."

It was further necessary to fortify the disciples against another trial, less terrible in appearance, yet often more formidable in effect than tyrants and tortures: that is, what they should have to undergo on the part of their own relatives. Several amongst them were

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(9) Amongst the Jews the roofs of the houses were flat, which makes the figure more appropriate than if the roofs had been of the same form as ours.

(10) They should not be feared for two reasons. 1st. They cannot take away the life of the soul. 2d. They can take away the life of the body by torments. For they would be much more formidable if the body could suffer always without dying; but it soon perishes, and in perishing, it snatches away from them their victim, and disappoints their fury.

to use the utmost violence; but others were only to employ persuasion and tears. The finest minds are most sensible to the latter; and then almost reproach themselves with the virtuous resistance, as if it were a criminal act. Be silent, flesh and blood, and learn at last, that all fear should give way to the fear of the Most High—his love soars far above all other love. For this is the meaning of these words, so terrifying to nature, and yet so conformable to the light of reason, since they merely express the rights of God, those rights which there would be as much blindness as impiety in disputing with him. Let us, then, hearken to these warnings, the same which issued from the lips of him who is truth itself. "Do not think that I came to send peace upon the earth. I came not to send peace, but the sword (11). For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law; and a man's enemies shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. He that taketh not up his cross and followeth me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for me, shall find it."

Jesus Christ concludes this discourse by the magnificent promises he makes to those who shall exercise charity and hospitality towards his disciples. These promises are evidence of the tenderness he entertained for them, and a fresh encouragement against the persecutions which he had foretold them. By inviting all men to do good to them, he shows us how well he loves them, and that if he allows them to be ill-used, it is only to perfect their virtue, and enrich

(11) He does not say *war*, where combatants fight on both sides, because his disciples, who were to receive the blows, should not return them. He therefore says *the sword;* that is to say, as appears by the ensuing words, the separation of the heart on one side, and on the other, bodily separation, by the impossibility of dwelling together. Moreover, we must not understand this as meaning that Jesus Christ should be the author of the division: he shall merely be the occasion thereof. He comes to establish the Gospel, which shall be received by some, and refused by others. The latter wish to eradicate it from the hearts of the others, and with this design shall persecute them. Here we have a division established; but it is visible that, if the Gospel be the occasion of it, its enemies are the true authors thereof.

their crown. Wherefore, as if he had again said to them, Go, then, without fear; already assured of my protection, you will ever find men who will deem it meritorious to entertain you kindly, and to share with you their goods, he continues in these terms: "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive the reward of a prophet; and he that receiveth a just man in the name of a just man, shall receive the reward of a just man. Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, amen, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

(*a*) "When Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he passed from thence to teach and preach in their cities. The apostles going forth [*also*], went about through the towns, preaching the Gospel, and healing everywhere. They preached that men should do penance; they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them (12)."

CHAPTER XXIV.

DECAPITATION OF SAINT JOHN.—MULTIPLICATION OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES.—JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER, AND SUPPORTS PETER.

(*b*) "Now Herod the tetrarch heard the fame of Jesus, for his name was made manifest. He heard all things that were done by Jesus, and he was in doubt, because it was said by some: John the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xi. 1; St. Luke, ix. 6; St. Mark, vi. 12, 13.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xiv. 1, 2–5; St. Mark, vi. 14–20; St. Luke, ix. 7–9.

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(12) The Council of Trent declares that the sacrament of extreme unction is insinuated by these words. Therefore, two sorts of persons are deceived—those who say that it is here clearly established, and those who say that these words have no reference to it. But the error of the second is more malignant and more dangerous than that of the first. In what relates to the proof of revealed dogmas, we deceive ourselves more innocently by addition than by subtraction.

Baptist is risen again from the dead, and, therefore, mighty works show forth themselves in him. Others said it is Elias hath appeared; and others, that one of the old prophets had risen again. But Herod said: John I have beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he sought to see him." Still, carried away by popular opinion, "he said to his servants: This is John the Baptist, whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead. For Herod himself had sent and apprehended John, and bound him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, wife of Philip, his brother, because he had married her; for John said to Herod: It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Herod, having a mind to put him to death, feared the people, because they esteemed him as a prophet. Now, Herodias laid snares for him, and was desirous to put him to death, and could not, for Herod feared John, knowing him to be a just and holy man; and kept him, and when he heard him, did many things, and heard him willingly."

The holy precursor's life was not the more secure on this account. Virtue may coerce the wicked to esteem it; but this estimation does not lessen the natural hatred they entertain towards virtue. He, therefore, who had only abstained from murder through fear of men, was but too well disposed to commit the same out of complacency for a woman. All she wanted was the occasion, which was not long in presenting itself. (*a*) "A convenient day was come, when Herod made a supper for his birth-day for the princes, and tribunes, and the chief men of Galilee. When the daughter of Herodias had come in, and had danced, and had pleased Herod, and them that were at table with him, the king said to the damsel, with an oath: Ask of me what thou wilt, and I will give it thee, though it be the half of my kingdom." The habits of the country did not permit the presence of women on these occasions; we must not, then, be astonished at the absence of Herodias. Her daughter, who was merely a child, might appear there a few moments without any consequence. But the child had already sufficient understanding to conceive that she ought not to decide on the request which it was proper to make—"Who," therefore, "when she was gone out, said to her mother," after having recounted to her the promise and

(*a*) St. Mark, vi. 21.

the oath of the king: "What shall I ask? The head of John the Baptist, said the mother. And when she was come immediately with haste to the king, (*a*) being instructed before by her mother, she asked, saying: I will that forthwith thou give me in a dish the head of John the Baptist. The king was struck sad: yet, because of his oath, and for them that were with him at table (1)," he would not incur the shame of breaking his promise, or mortify the girl by refusing her request; he would not displease her, but, "sending an executioner, he commanded that his head should be brought in a dish. The executioner beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a dish, and gave it to the damsel, and the damsel gave it to her mother." Thus the head of the greatest of men was made the price of a dance; and, after this transaction, the world should be fully convinced that there is no crime too dark for an abandoned woman to exact, or a weak and passionate man to grant. "Which John's disciples hearing, came and took the body, and laid it in a tomb. Then they came and told Jesus. Which, when Jesus had heard, he retired from thence by a boat."

We do not see for what reason the death of John the Baptist should make him apprehensive of a similar fate. But what we cannot see, he knew; and he might have a certainty of what appears unlikely to us. Yet, what we read in Josephus the historian may throw some light upon this point. He says that Herod put John the Baptist to death, because he feared, lest he should excite a sedition. He deceives himself, or, rather, he wishes to deceive the world, as to the real cause of this assassination, which was no other than the one recounted by the evangelists. But there is a strong presumption that Herod, to exonerate himself, at least in part, from the odium of so great a crime, disseminated the rumor that John the Baptist had been secretly trying to cause an insurrection amongst the people. He was a saint, the object of public veneration, and he

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiv. 8.

(1) It is not unlikely that they seconded the request of the daughter, and that they solicited the king to grant it to her. What was occurring before their eyes taught them the heavy risk they might incur who should have the misfortune to displease the favorite.

had made for himself several disciples: on what ground, then, could they accuse him of sedition? Now all these traits belonged also to Jesus; and, moreover, he was a worker of miracles. Herod, who as yet knew nothing of him, would not be long in ignorance. Might he not, when he became aware of his history, conceive the design of putting him to death, under the same pretext, inasmuch as Jesus resembled John in so many ways? His death could not be attributed to the solicitations of Herodias. Sedition would have been the sole apparent cause of it, and by this means Herod would have given more likelihood to that pretended cause for the death of John, by extending the same treatment to all those who were similarly situated, although they did not come in collision with the adulteress. In one word, Herod might say: The proof that I have sacrificed John to the public safety, and not to the vengeance of a woman, is, that I have treated Jesus in the same way, a person as dangerous as himself, and against whom this woman had no cause of complaint. Those who say that there were too many witnesses of the true cause of John's death, to leave it in his power to substitute another, must be ignorant of the fact, that the people may be brought to believe every thing you wish, even if there were one hundred witnesses to the contrary. And, in point of fact, Josephus assigns no other cause for this foul deed, than the fear which Herod entertained lest John should excite a sedition. He therefore believed this; or, what comes almost to the same thing, he hoped to make it believed, although he lived at a period when some of those who assisted at that fearful festival might still be living.

Thus the Man-God, who is ignorant of nothing which can happen in any possible conjuncture, might know the designs which Herod had formed against him, if he had remained longer within reach to feel its effects; and this knowledge may have been the motive for his retreat. But it seems that to this reason there was joined a second: (*a*) "The apostles, when they were returned" from their mission, "coming together to Jesus, related to him all things that they had done and taught." They required a little relaxation after such great labor. "Jesus said to them: Come apart into a desert place,

(*a*) St. Mark, vi. 30–34; St. Luke, ix. 10, 11; St. John, vi. 1–4.

and rest a little; for there were many coming and going, and they had not so much as time to eat. Going up then into a ship, they went aside into a desert place apart which belongeth to Bethsaida, over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias. They saw them going away, and many knew; they ran flocking thither on foot from all the cities, and were there before him. A great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Jesus, going out of the ship, saw a great multitude, and he had [*that*] compassion on them" which he was accustomed to feel on beholding them, "because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. He received them, went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. Now the pasch, the festival-day of the Jews, was near at hand. Jesus began to teach them many things. He spoke to them of the kingdom of God, and healed them who had need of healing."

(*a*) "When the day was now far spent, his twelve disciples came to him, saying: This is a desert place, and the hour is now past; send them away, that, going into the next villages and towns round about, they may buy themselves victuals (2). He answering, said to them: They have no need to go, give you them to eat (3). And they said to him: Let us go and buy bread for two hundred pence, and we will give them to eat (4). When Jesus," who, from the top

(*a*) St. Mark, vi. 35; St. Matthew, xiv. 15, 16; St. Luke, ix. 12; St. John, vi. 5–7.

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(2) These people forgot even the care of providing nourishment, in order to seek the kingdom of God and his justice. They found the kingdom of God, and we are going to see that nourishment did not fail them.

(3) This was the prophesying of what was going to take place. These people were fed, in point of fact, from the hands of the apostles, and out of the little stock which they had for provisions. Pastors, do not ever despair to be enabled to provide for the wants of your people: give what you have, ask from God what you have not, and you shall witness miracles.

(4) This appears as if said ironically. But as the same thing is said by Saint Andrew, in a serious and affirmative tone, it is more natural to think that the apostles made this proposition as if they both wished and had it in their power to execute it, supposing that Jesus Christ had taken them at their word. If their faith may seem weak on this occasion, they at least give marks of a very uncommon charity. 1st. They are attentive to the wants of the people, and they are careful in representing them to their divine Master. 2d. They propose to go and purchase bread, and to employ a sum which would have apparently exhausted the common purse. 3d. Lastly, they sacrificed the little provisions

of a mountain he had ascended, could discover the entire plain, "had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh unto him, he said to Philip: Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this he said to try him; for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him: Two hundred pennyworth of bread are not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little." He should have added: But if we are deficient in human means, your power can easily supply them. It was this act of faith which Jesus gave him an opportunity to make, yet he did not do it. But the avowal which Philip made of the impossibility of providing food for so many mouths, was in itself a proof of the miracle which the Saviour was going to operate. To render it more evident, (*a*) "He said to the apostles: How many loaves have you? go and see; and when they knew, Andrew the brother of Simon, one of his disciples, saith to him: There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many, unless perhaps we should go and buy some food for all the multitude? Now, there were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Thereupon, he commanded them that they should make them all sit down by fifties in a company upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks by hundreds, and by fifties (5)."

(*a*) St. Mark, vi. 38–40; St. John, vi. 8–10; St. Luke, ix. 13–15; St. Matthew, xiv. 21.

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which remained for themselves. The faith was, therefore, weak: nevertheless, the charity appears not to have been so. The fact is, there was in this charity more of natural compassion, or of generosity, than of charity, properly speaking. For charity is only such, inasmuch as it is set in motion by motives of faith. Nevertheless, this tender and effective compassion is still a virtue, and a disposition very favorable to the increase of faith and the perfection of charity.

(5) Saint Luke says that Jesus Christ gave orders to his apostles to distribute the people in companies of fifty. He adds, that they did what was enjoined upon them. Still, according to Saint Mark, they made up companies—some of fifty, others of *one hundred;* which might make it be thought that they did not obey to the letter. If this be regarded as a difficulty, the following explanation may serve for the solution:—The apostles made each company consist of *fifty men.* It may have been remarked, that the women and little children are not counted; but there is every appearance that they did not separate the women from their husbands, nor the little children from their mothers, which would have made several companies of one hundred persons, although in each company there were only fifty *men.*

(*a*) "Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them; he then broke the loaves and gave to his disciples, to set before them that were sat down. In like manner also he divided the two fishes among them all, as much as they could eat. They did all eat, and were filled. When they were filled, Jesus said to his disciples: Gather up the fragments that remain (6), lest they be lost. They gathered up, therefore, and filled twelve baskets (7) with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. They also took up the leavings of the fishes. Those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said: This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. Jesus therefore, when he knew that they would come to take him by force, and make him king, immediately obliged his disciples to go up into the ship, that they might go before him over the water to Bethsaida, whilst he dismissed the people; and when he had dismissed them, he fled again into the mountain himself alone (8). He went up into it to pray; and when it was evening he was there alone (9)."

It must have been perceptible that neither Jesus Christ nor his disciples enjoyed the repose they sought to find in solitude. Nature

(*a*) St. Mark, vi. 41–46; St. John, vi. 12–15; St. Matthew, xiv. 23.

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(6) Thus the eucharistic bread satiates an entire world, and is not consumed. We have just seen that Jesus Christ employed, upon this occasion, the same ceremonies as at the institution of the eucharist. He shall soon tell us himself that this miracle was the figure of it.

(7) Miraculous multiplication, the ordinary fruit which springs from alms-deeds. Perhaps it is the most common of all prodigies. Every thing is not written; but we may not hesitate to surmise that, amongst those persons who give great alms, there are to be found some who have experienced it more than once.

What remained to the apostles far surpassed what they had given. No one ever grows poor by giving alms, but very often an individual becomes rich by so doing. This virtue has the promises for the present and for the future life.

(8) After this flight of the Saviour, there was one crime for which he should not have been suspected, viz., that of aspiring to royalty. It was, nevertheless, for this pretended crime that he was soon after judged, condemned, and crucified. Nothing so little surprises those who have observed the extreme excesses to which the blindness of passion urges on judicial iniquity.

(9) He did not require, in order to compose his mind, either solitude or the silence of night; but both one and the other are necessary to us, and he wished to instruct us.

did require it; yet charity cannot be satisfied to grant the comfort to itself, whilst there remain wants to be alleviated. In such circumstances the truly charitable forget themselves, and derive their very strength from exhaustion. After a journey so very fatiguing, the disciples had not a more tranquil night. To obey the order they had just received, (*a*) "when evening was come, they went down to the sea, and when they had gone up into the ship, they went over the sea to Capharnaum." But ere they arrived, their faith was again tested by many trials. "It was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them." We have seen already that "he himself was alone on the land. But the boat in the midst of the sea was tossed with the waves, for the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew. Jesus seeing them laboring in rowing, for the wind was against them, about the fourth watch of the night (10), he cometh to them walking upon the sea, and he would have passed them. When they had rowed, therefore, about five-and-twenty or thirty (11) furlongs (12), they see Jesus walking upon the sea, and drawing nigh to the ship, and they were afraid. It is an apparition, say they, troubled, and they cried out for fear; for they all saw him, and were troubled. Immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying: Be of good heart, it is I,

(*a*) St. John, vi. 16–21; St. Mark, vi. 47–52; St. Matthew, xiv. 24, 26, 28–32.

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(10) Towards three o'clock in the morning. The night was divided into three military watches, each of which lasted three hours. The moon was then at its full, since it was the time of Easter; therefore the disciples might easily see Jesus Christ, but they could not recognize him. The Saviour's delay had then the effect which it is accustomed to have every time that God seems to forget his servants in their tribulations. He tests their faith, he exercises their patience, he renders them sensible of the necessity of succor from on high, he obliges them to recognize and adore the all-powerful protector from whom salvation cometh—salvation which could no longer be hoped for, but from him alone.

(11) It is only consistent with truth to advance as uncertain that concerning which one has not entire certainty, and there is nothing in this repugnant to divine inspiration. The Holy Ghost may have inspired the sacred writers to recount things precisely as they knew them, or as they recollected them, supposing, nevertheless, that in their recollections or their knowledge there was merely uncertainty; for if there were error, the inspiration would have rectified it. This is also applicable to the *two* or *three* measures which were contained in the watering-pots at the marriage of Cana.

(12) Eight furlongs make one Italian mile, and sixteen furlongs make one of the common French leagues.

fear ye not. Lord, said Peter, making answer, if it be thou (13), bid me come to thee upon the waters. Come, he said: and Peter, going down out of the boat, walked upon the water to come to Jesus. But seeing the wind strong, he was afraid, and when he began to sink, he cried out: Lord, save me. Immediately Jesus stretching forth his hand, took hold of him, and said to him: O thou of little faith, why didst thou fear? The disciples were willing, therefore, to take him into the ship, and he went up to them into the ship. And when he and Peter were come up into the boat, the wind ceased; and they were far more astonished within themselves (for," in the trouble in which they were, "they understood not concerning the loaves, for their heart was blinded); and presently the ship was at the land to which they were going." This was the fourth miracle which Jesus Christ wrought in their presence: he had walked upon the waters; he had made Peter do the same; he had hushed the tempest; and, lastly, he had caused them to make in a moment the passage of several hours. So many prodigies operated one after another, caused the bandage to fall from their eyes. (*a*) "They that were in the boat came and adored him, saying: Indeed thou art the Son of God (14).

(*a*) St. Matthew, xiv. 33–35; St. Mark, vi. 53–56.

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(13) Calvin, who reproaches Saint Peter with fifteen mortal sins, finds out two against him here. One is that of infidelity, for having said to Jesus Christ, *If it be thou:* therefore he doubted, concludes Calvin. The other is that of presumption, for having wished to walk upon the water, like his Master. Catholic interpreters find here, on the contrary, grounds for admiring the faith of this great apostle, and the fervor of his love. There was no infidelity in doubting whether he who walked upon the water was Jesus Christ, since they did not see him distinctly enough to be assured of the fact; and there was as much faith in walking upon it at his word, supposing that it was he, as there was great love in doing so from the desire of sooner joining him. Jesus Christ, by telling him to come, and by working so great a miracle in his favor, seals with his approbation all the favorable interpretations which may be given to this act of the chief of the apostles. It is true that in the moment of danger his faith wavered—that is to say, that his faith, very lively in the first instance, appeared feeble in the second. Let it be noticed, nevertheless, that what Jesus Christ reproaches him with is not infidelity, but merely the smallness of his faith. Calvin should have confined himself to this; but it was a difficult matter for him to spare Saint Peter, whom he regarded, with reason, as the founder of the papacy.

(14) An evangelist has already told us that the apostles had embarked in order to go to Capharnaum. Another makes the bark arrive now at Genesareth, which creates in

"When Jesus and his disciples had passed over, they came into the land of Genesareth, and set ashore. Immediately when they were gone out of the ship, the men of that place knew Jesus, and, running through the whole country, they brought in beds those that were sick where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into towns or into villages or cities, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch but the hem of his garment. And as many as touched him were made whole."

CHAPTER XXV.

DISCOURSE OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE EUCHARIST.—MURMUR OF THE JEWS.

(*a*) "THE next day," after the multiplication of the loaves, "the multitude that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other ship but one; that Jesus had not entered into the ship with his disciples; but that his disciples were gone away alone." They were at a loss to know what was become of him; and this people, still proposing to proclaim him king, sought for him in vain, when "other ships came in from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they had eaten [*miraculous*] bread, the Lord giving thanks. When, therefore, they saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples," presuming, moreover, that whatever was the case, he had gone to rejoin them, "they took shipping, and came to Capharnaum, seeking for Jesus. When they found him on the other side of the sea," either that same day, or perhaps the day after, "they said to him," with sur-

(*a*) St. John, vi. 22–27.

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embarrassing difficulty for the interpreters. All agree that Jesus went successively to these places, which were not far distant from one another. But some state that he first arrived at Capharnaum, in order to go afterwards to Genesareth. Others state that he disembarked at Genesareth, whence he proceeded almost immediately to Capharnaum. It would be too long to report their reasons; and the question, which is not very important, would not, after a full report, be any thing clearer than it now is.

prise: "Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" Instead of satisfying their curiosity, Jesus, who wished to instruct them, deemed it more proper to disclose to them the interested motive of their great eagerness to find him. "He answered them [*therefore*]: Amen, amen, I say to you, you seek me, not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting (1), which the Son of man will give you, for him hath God the Father sealed" by the prodigies which attest the truth of his mission, and which are, as it were, the letters patent by which God declares to all men that it is himself who sends him, and that all his words should be received as the express declaration of the divine will.

An idle life, passed amid the abundance of good things, was, as we see, the sole attraction to this people, and this the bread miraculously multiplied made them hope from Jesus Christ. The first of these hopes is already destroyed by this word of the Saviour: "*Labor.*" Neither will he let the other exist, at least in the manner they had conceived it. Nevertheless, as he has just spoken to them of a nourishment which, according to the meaning they attached to his words, should hinder them from dying, their appetite, excited by so flattering a hope, makes them consent to labor. The only

(1) Some heretics have concluded, from this expression, that it is forbidden to work for our living. They should have further concluded that it is forbidden to eat, since Saint Paul said: *If any man will not work, neither let him eat;* but their logic did not go quite so far. We must toil in order to live, in fulfilment of that sentence pronounced against the human race: *In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread.* But there are two different lives: the life of the body and the life of the soul—the present life and the future life. The body perishes, the soul perisheth not; the present life is short, the future life shall be eternal. To prefer the first to the second—to do every thing for the former and nothing for the latter—is the disorderly, but too common, state of things, which Jesus Christ reproves by this expression: *Labor not* (principally) *for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting.*

We must toil from necessity, but also from virtue; we must toil, but we may do so from the motive of fulfilling the will of God; we must labor to procure ourselves the bread which is necessary for the support of this mortal life, but, above all, in order to share that immortal life, which shall be the recompense of necessary labor, sanctified by similar motives. This labor practically harmonizes Jesus Christ with Saint Paul; and, by means of the nourishment which perisheth, worketh out that which endureth unto life everlasting.

thing they had yet to hear was, by what labor they should merit this nourishment. "They said, therefore, unto him: What shall we do that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered, and said to them: This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he hath sent (2)."

This was but the commencement, and the effort was not very painful: still they stopped short at this first step. "What sign, therefore, dost thou show, that we may see, and may believe thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written: He gave them from heaven to eat."

Partly foiled in their hopes, they already began to waver in their faith. They demanded miracles from him who had just been working one so striking in their favor. It is true, they do not as yet formally reject him; but, by a subtlety worthy of their stubborn and ungrateful hearts, they taunt him with the miracle of the manna, which they judged so superior to his, that the latter, according to their notions, could no longer be called a miracle. Whence their incredulity tacitly drew this conclusion, which tended less to elevate Moses than to lower Jesus Christ: Let this new legislator work miracles like to those of the old, and we shall have in him the same faith which our fathers had in Moses.

Here, again, we recognize the predominant taste of this people, inasmuch as, for the purpose of exciting the emulation of the Saviour, they oppose to him a miracle of abundance and satiety; for, as Jesus Christ had told them, they estimated much higher the nourishment which gratified their appetite than the miraculous work of God which produced it. This was, perhaps, the principal reason of the preference which they gave to Moses. The latter had fed two

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(2) We shall shortly see that this wondrous aliment is nothing else than the eucharistic bread. We merit it by doing the work of God—that is faith, saith the Saviour; not that faith is enough to merit this gift, if the faith were alone, but because it is the first of all the requisite dispositions, and that it generally produces the others. It is, therefore, by faith that we must always commence when we prepare to eat the heavenly bread. Humility, desire, and love shall flow naturally from this source, and these sentiments shall have more or less strength, in proportion as the faith shall be more lively or more languishing. This is a point to which, perhaps, sufficient attention is not paid. Persons have faith; but they repose too easily upon habitual faith, which should be then redoubled, to make it produce double fervor.

millions of people during forty years; what was it, in comparison, to have once given food to a few thousands? As if the grandeur of miracles was to be measured (if we may dare use such language) by the bushel, and that, in a smaller compass, God might not display equal power. But, finally, Moses was not the author of the manna, which their fathers had received from God alone. Neither was this bread from heaven, which is only termed such in the sense in which we say, the birds of heaven; that is to say, because it fell from the upper region of the air, where it had been formed by the hands of angels; neither was this bread to be at all compared to that which Jesus Christ comes to give them. I say it was not comparable to this bread, neither in its origin, since the latter is properly the bread descended from heaven; nor in the extent of its use, since it may suffice for all men during all ages; nor in its effect, which shall be to give and preserve an immortal life. A truth which must have seemed incredible to these prejudiced and coarse minds; wherefore Jesus Christ, in order to give it greater weight, is going to assure them of it with an oath.

"He said to them then: Amen, amen, I say to you: Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; for the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. They said, therefore, unto him: Lord, give us always this bread."

This was just the answer of the Samaritan, whom they also resembled, inasmuch as they did not understand the bread which gives life to the world in a sense more spiritual than that woman had at first understood the water which gives eternal life. But *Jesus*, then, beginning to enter into the depths of the mystery he had to propose to them, "answered them [*thus*]: I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst. But I said unto you: that you also have seen me, and you believe not." Consequently you follow me in vain, because it is not with the feet of the body, but by faith, that men come really to me. Thus it is, that "all that the Father giveth to me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will not cast out, because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. Now, this is the will of the Father, who

sent me (3), that of all that he hath given to me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again in the last day. This is the will of my Father, that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth in him, may have life everlasting; and I will raise him up again in the last day (4)."

Such is the life which Jesus, the true bread of heaven, cometh to give to the world, and this part of the mystery is already explained. It is not this first state of existence, the termination of which is pronounced by an irrevocable sentence; it is that which Jesus Christ shall impart to those who will nourish themselves with him—a life eternal and eternally happy, which shall not only be exempt from death, but also from all the wants and miseries of the present life; a life of which Jesus Christ could say, in the most literal sense, that its possessor shall suffer neither hunger nor thirst, because, together with a relish ever new, he shall enjoy the fulness of everlasting bliss. What a life!—and what transports of joy should not such a magnificent promise cause to the Jews! But it must be allowed that the Saviour had to deal with most stubborn and untractable minds; instead of opening their hearts to this great and precious hope, they pause to criticise his words. "They, therefore, murmured at him, because he had said: I am the living bread which came

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(3) The will of the Father and the divine will of the Son is but one and the same will; therefore, when Jesus Christ speaks of the will of his Father and of his own, as of two different wills, he speaks of his human will. By this will he receives all that his Father gives him; and when he says, with reference to this, that he is come to do not his own will, but that of his Father, he wishes to give us to understand, that such is his submission to the will of the Father, that, supposing (what is not the case) that he felt repugnance in receiving all those whom his Father gives him, he would make this repugnance yield to the desire which he has to execute, not his own will, but that of his Father. This submission, despite of the repugnance of his human nature, appeared in him when it was expedient to drink the chalice of his passion.

(4) All men, without distinction of good or bad, shall be resuscitated by the power of Jesus Christ; but there is only mention made here of the resurrection of the first, because this shall be the fruit of his merits, and, as it were, the development of the germ of life which the eucharistic bread shall have mingled with their flesh, and which shall have preserved itself even in their arid bones and inanimate ashes. Wherefore, this resurrection alone shall be happy and glorious, while that of the wicked, simply produced by the almighty justice of an avenging God, shall be less a return to life than the commencement of a life ever dying, and of an immortal death.

down from heaven;" and, after the example of the Nazarenes, some of whom were, perhaps, mingled in the crowd, "they said: Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How, then, saith he: I came down from heaven?"

This murmur was but too perceptible; and Jesus, whose discourse was interrupted thereby, thought himself obliged to silence it. "He, therefore, answered, and said to them [*in an austere tone*]: Murmur not among yourselves;" though, after all, neither your murmurs nor your indocility need excite surprise; they are the natural result of the low and grovelling motives which brought you here. It is not by following the allurements of flesh and blood that I am to be found. "No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him (5): and I will raise him up in the last day." If you do not wish to be one of these, do not think the number shall be smaller on that account, since of all nations, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, is it written in the prophets (6): "They shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned *of him*, cometh to me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, but he who is of God; he *alone* hath seen the Father." Nevertheless, without having seen the Father unveiled, we have heard, and learned from him, when we observe with attention and

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(5) *By an interior attraction, by making him wish what he did not previously wish,* saith Saint Augustine. By comparing this expression of the Saviour with that which he said to Saint Peter: *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven,* we have the double operation of grace—the revelation and the attraction, the light of the understanding and the impulse of the will. The Fathers have always found this attraction in the text which gives occasion to this note, and they availed themselves of it to advantage against Pelagius, who denied its necessity and declared against its existence. The enemies of free will have abused it, to support their dogma of irresistible grace. We find the Catholic truth in the middle station between these two errors. We, therefore, adopt the medium, by believing, on one side, that, in the matter of salvation, man can do absolutely nothing without the interior attraction of grace; and, on the other, that he always has the unhappy power of resisting this attraction, and of rendering it useless to him, by his resistance, according to this decision of the Council of Trent, sess. 6, can. 4: If any one saith that the free will of man, moved and excited by God, ... cannot, if he wishes so to do, refuse its consent, ... let him be anathema.

(6) This prophecy is in Isaiah, chapter 54, nearly in the same terms that we see it here. It is to be found in equivalent terms in several other prophets. It began to have its accomplishment presently after the descent of the Holy Ghost.



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receive with docility this testimony which he hath rendered to his Son by his own lips, and which he hath since repeated and confirmed by a host of prodigies: (*a*) "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONTINUATION OF THE DISCOURSE ON THE EUCHARIST.—THE DISCIPLES ARE SCANDALIZED.—CONSTANCY OF THE APOSTLES.

After this digression, in which Jesus Christ has incidentally spoken of the immutability of divine election and of the necessity of interior grace—mysteries which he merely sketches (if we may use the expression), and the development of which he seems to reserve for the apostle of the Gentiles—he returns to the principal object of his discourse. After having informed them that he is the true bread of life, and that he who shall be nourished with this bread shall live eternally, he proceeds to inform them that this bread is his own flesh, which should be eaten and received within us in the same way as ordinary food. It is thus that, seeming to enter into their material views, he shocks their senses, and completely puzzles their reason. He resumes, therefore, and continues in these terms: (*b*) "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in me hath life everlasting. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that, if any man eat of it, he may not die (1).

(*a*) St. Matthew, iii. 17. (*b*) St. John, vi. 47–72.

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(1) All those who eat the living bread die corporeally, and all those who have eaten the manna are not spiritually dead; we must, therefore, explain in what sense Jesus Christ has said of the first that they do not die, and of the second that they are dead. The Saviour speaks less of persons than of the properties of these two aliments. Manna did not give immortal life to the body, much less to the soul. The bread which is here called the living bread gives, or, if we prefer so to express ourselves, it supports: 1st, the life of the soul—a life immortal in its nature, which can only perish through the fault of

"I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh [*which I am to give*], for the life of the world.

"The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat (2)?" It may be that they spoke this through derision, or that, having seen the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, they inquired by what new prodigy he could substantiate so strange a promise; for it is questionable whether they thought that Jesus Christ spoke to them of eating his flesh cut in pieces. Incredulous as they were, they must have found it difficult to imagine that such a thought could have entered the mind of a man so wise and so holy as Jesus must naturally have appeared to them. Yet what else could they imagine, supposing he spoke of the real eating of the proper substance of his flesh, and what other meaning could be given to his words? This it was that caused their embarrassment, and the point upon which it seems reasonable that Jesus Christ should have enlightened them, if, as has been contended in later ages, he had only spoken of eating merely by faith

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him who hath received it, so that if he come to perdition, that death should not be imputed to the bread, but to him alone. In the same way as if God had left to Adam, in the fruit of the tree of life, the power of committing suicide, in the supposition that he availed himself of this power of self-murder, his death could not be attributed to the tree of life, but to the violence which he would have voluntarily exercised upon himself. 2d. It is the common opinion of the holy Fathers that this living bread imprints upon the very bodies of those who nourish themselves with it a vivifying quality, which is in them, as it were, the germ of the happy and immortal life which shall be communicated to them by the resurrection. We should believe this with these Fathers; but supposing, what they themselves supposed, that the just who preceded the coming of Jesus Christ, the children who died before the age when the Church permits them to communicate, and, generally, all those who have died in justice, without having been able to participate in the eucharistic bread; that all these, I say, shall have received the virtue of it, which virtue shall have supplied the reality to them. There is nothing in this which should appear surprising, since baptism, the most necessary of all the sacraments, is supplied by charity and by martyrdom.

(2) *How*—a Jewish word, as Saint Cyril calls it: let us take care not to advance it; it is the source of all infidelity. We should also call it a Calvinistic word, for the Calvinists have likewise said: *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* This word has no other signification than this: I cannot comprehend such a thing; therefore God cannot make it be so, at least God has not declared that it is so; which is reducible to this silly proposition: Nothing can be except what I can comprehend.

alone. The latter point of view has nothing which shocks either the senses, or reason, or humanity; and, by speaking as he did, Jesus Christ was a rock of scandal to the incredulous. But he could not give the metaphorical explanation, because he had spoken, in point of fact, of real eating; he could not, I say, destroy the meaning which himself had wished to establish; wherefore, in pursuance of the right which he had to be believed upon his own word, without explaining how he wished them to confide in his almighty power, instead of struggling to disabuse them, he reiterates these strong expressions which had conveyed to their minds the idea of the real eating of his flesh; and, to confirm them in it, he swears for the fourth time, and saith to them: "Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him (3). As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me (4).

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(3) Jesus Christ does not say: He dwells in my flesh, and my flesh in him; but, *he abideth in me, and I in him.* For, in point of fact, the flesh and the blood withdraw when the accidents become altered; but the vivifying spirit abideth—that is to say, the divine person, which in Jesus Christ is properly the *I:* it abideth, I say, producing life in the soul of him who has received the flesh and the blood, which are, as it were, the channel by which the divinity communicates itself. Thus, Jesus Christ and the man who receiveth him live by the same life, produced by the same vivifying principle, according to what Saint Paul saith: *He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit* (1 Cor. vi. 17). This is what the Saviour understands by these words: *He abideth in me, and I in him.* An expression which is scarcely sufficient to give an idea of so intimate a union; but human language furnishes no other.

(4) The explanation of the preceding text serves also to throw light upon this one. In the same way as the Father, by sending the Son—that is to say, by uniting the divinity to the humanity in the person of the Son, has given to humanity the life of which the divinity is the efficient principle; thus he who unites himself to the Son by the eating of his body, likewise receives life from him. We therefore see life reside in the divinity as its source, whence it infuses itself into the humanity of Jesus Christ, which is united to it. The humanity in its turn unites itself to men by the eating, and communicates to them the life with which it is filled and animated. This life is assumed in the most extensive and most excellent sense. It is at the same time the life of grace, the life of glory, and even the natural life, which consists in the eternal union of the soul with the body. Je-

This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead; he that eateth this bread (5) shall live forever. These things he said, teaching in the synagogue, in Capharnaum."

After reading these words of the Saviour, no one will be surprised that we should understand with reference to the Eucharist, not only these, but also the preceding words. It is, in point of fact, this adorable sacrament which alone is spoken of throughout the entire of this discourse. Though shrouded at first, it discovers itself by degrees, and is at last disclosed here with such evidence as renders it no longer possible to repudiate the fact. We first see it announced under the name of nourishment which endureth unto life everlasting; then Jesus Christ calls it the living bread which came down from heaven; afterwards he adds, that he is this same living bread who, by the incarnation, came down from heaven, and who giveth life. Had he stopped here, we might have thought, with some appearance of reason, that there is question here merely of his mysteries and maxims, which he has just proposed to men as a salutary bread with which they should nourish themselves by faith and meditation; but when at last he says expressly, that this bread is his flesh, which was to be given for the life of the world—an expression which he is found to repeat at the institution of the Eucharist; when, instead of disabusing his hearers, whom this expression had so much shocked, he drops the word bread, and no longer speaks to them but of eating his flesh, which is "meat indeed," and of drinking his blood,

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sus Christ, from the instant of his conception, has had, in point of fact, the two first, and by right, the third; for he only died because he hath wished it, and he hath arisen never more to die again. Like him, we have, in point of fact, the first life, and by right, the other two lives; but we shall only enjoy the second after death, and the third after the resurrection. They are deferred in our regard, but they are due to us, if we preserve the vivifying spirit which Jesus Christ communicates to us by the communion of his body and of his blood. This seems to be merely the development of these words of Saint Paul to the Romans, chapter viii. 11: *And if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies, because of his spirit that dwelleth in you.*

(5) From this text, and from several others of a similar nature, where mention is only made of the eating of bread alone, the Council of Trent, sess. 21, ch. i., concludes that communion under the two kinds is not necessary to participate in the sacrament.

which is "drink indeed." it is clear that he himself explains the sense of his words in a manner that leaves no room for reasonable doubt. That those, however, who reject the dogma of the real presence, should endeavor to elude this clear and natural meaning, does not surprise us—the stamp of reality is so visible, more especially in the conclusion of the discourse, that they could not prevent its application to the Eucharist, if they acknowledged that the question here had any reference to the Eucharist. But that Catholic interpreters should have deviated from this so evident sense, and substituted far-fetched allegories and forced meanings, this is what we can hardly understand, if we did not know that the inordinate desire of seeing what is not perceived by the rest of men, often makes stars visible, and obscures the sun at mid-day. Let it suffice for us, then, in order to prove that Jesus Christ spoke here of the Eucharist, to observe, that he could not express himself with more energy and clearness, supposing he had wished to speak of it in point of fact. Thus all the Fathers, without exception, and the Church in all the Councils wherein this discourse is cited, have understood it to refer to this divine sacrament. With these authorities and proofs there is associated a conjecture, which has appeared highly reasonable to the best interpreters—that is, that it was natural for Saint John, the only one of the four evangelists who does not speak of the Eucharist when detailing the Last Supper, to speak of it on this occasion. It is easy for us to judge that, having written subsequently to all the others, he wished to omit what they had already related, and to report what they had omitted.

After this explanation, it seems advisable to make some reflections which may serve to justify the wisdom and goodness of the Saviour in the eyes of those who may find it hard to recognize here either the one or the other.

There is no doubt that the reason which induced him to pronounce this discourse, was the design which he entertained of preparing the world for faith in the divine and incomprehensible Eucharist. Apparently he succeeded in this, as regards his apostles; for else why, when he afterwards said to them, Take and eat—this is my body; why, I say, did they not exhibit any surprise, if it were not that what was then performing was merely the accomplish-

ment of what he had announced and promised them. But it is certain that this produced quite a contrary effect upon the multitude who heard it; and that, far from increasing their faith, it was only instrumental in quenching the little which some of them began to have in the Saviour. We may, perhaps, be asked if this was not, in some manner, laying a snare for this feeble new-born faith, by submitting it to such a trial? Perhaps here, again, the reader will bear in mind the conduct of the Church, which, in the primitive ages, veiled from the eyes of the catechumens a mystery which gave such a shock to reason and the senses, and only proposed it to them when, by baptism, they had received the habit of faith. Piety seldom allows itself to put such questions as these, which often proceed from a prying and indiscreet curiosity. We are going to answer them with the aid of Him whose works, justified in themselves, do not require our apologies, but who condescends in his goodness to account for his conduct to us, and to suffer us to enter into judgment with him.

Jesus Christ had resolved to institute the Eucharist—a mystery displaying such admirable love and such munificent liberality, that no one can ever suspect its divine author of being deficient in kindness. Before instituting this great sacrament, he wished to prepare men for so wondrous an event; and that he had good reasons for so doing, no one can pretend to doubt.

One of these might be that, having the intention of proposing it only to the apostles, he wished that they might have it in their power to say, when announcing it for the first time: "My brethren, this is no invention of ours. Remember what the Saviour said of the real eating of his flesh. What he then promised he has since given, and now distributes it amongst you by our agency." Thus, while trying their faith at the present moment, he makes the way smooth for their future belief. But we must also acknowledge that the course adopted by our Saviour on this occasion was marked by the most considerate kindness. True, he announces the most incomprehensible of all mysteries; but then what pains does he take to prepare the mind for the revelation thereof. He began by curing the sick and infirm; next, compassionating the wants of the people —he satiates them with five loaves and two fishes, by a prodigy so

surprising, and, at the same time, striking the senses so powerfully, that the whole multitude cried out, in a sudden transport, that he is the prophet by excellence, who was to come into the world. Their enthusiasm even impels them to declare him king. He having concealed himself by flight, they cross the lake, and go to seek him all the way to Capharnaum, where, at length, they find him. Could they have been better prepared to hear his divine doctrines; and, if you were to select throughout all their life the moment in which you would presume the greatest facility on their part to hearken to him and believe him, would you not have taken this in preference? It is true, they did not then comprehend his words; but, after having recognized him for a prophet, were they not further bound to admit the truth of his words, until it should please him to give them the gift of understanding? God has performed what he wished;—who shall dare to say to him, Why hast thou acted thus? This general answer has ever been sufficient for humble and submissive faith; but it is obvious that this is not the sole reply which can be made here, since it is apparent that Jesus Christ admirably adapted himself to the weakness of those to whom he spoke, and that he did not expose to any trial the faith of this refractory people until he had first employed the means which, by rendering faith easy, gave them less excuse for incredulity.

But it was not merely amongst the people that unbelievers were to be found. "Many of his disciples hearing it, said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it?" They spoke this to one another in a low tone. "But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured, said to them: Doth this scandalize you? If, then, you shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before (6)? It is the

(6) These words are susceptible of two different meanings, which correspond with the two parts of the discourse of the Saviour, and the two objections made by his hearers. They had murmured first, because Jesus Christ had said that he was the living bread *descended* from heaven. If we apply here his answer, it signifies: you do not wish to believe at present that I am descended from heaven; will you believe it when you shall see me reascend thither? Applied to the real eating of his flesh, it signifies: you find it very hard to believe that I can give you my flesh as food, and my blood as drink, now that I am in the midst of you; how much more incredible shall the thing appear to you when, after having seen me ascend to heaven, you must believe that this flesh, at the same time that it is in heaven, is given as nourishment here on earth? The first

Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing (7). The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (8). But there are some of you that believe not. For from the beginning"—that is to say, from all eternity, as God and as man, from the moment of his conception, "Jesus knew who they were that did not believe, and who he was that would betray him; and he said: Therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to me, unless it be given him by my Father,"—a purely gratuitous gift, which cannot be merited by those to whom it is made, but which, being offered to all, makes those responsible who are deprived of it only because they have not wished to receive it; for it is offered in vain if it be not received. A great many of those whom Jesus addressed were just in this predicament, which was the reason why, "after this, many of his disciples went back (9), and walked no more with him."

Jesus did not appear surprised at this desertion, which he had, of course, foreseen; he even wished to profit by the occasion, to

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sense facilitates faith in the incarnation; the second renders more difficult that of the real eating. The second is the most probable, because it is much more probable that Jesus Christ should here reply to the second of the two objections; and, by indicating his presence in different places by means of the Eucharist, we may say he consummates the revelation of this great mystery.

(7) The flesh of Jesus Christ is not vivifying by itself; it is only so by the spirit; that is to say, by the divinity which is united to it, and which communicates itself, through it, to those who eat it. This explanation, which harmonizes well with the text, has nothing in it repugnant to the faith of the real presence. It leaves the preceding words in all their energy, and therein the reality is most clearly expressed, even in the mutilated version of Protestants.

(8) That is to say, pause not at the carnal and revolting sense in which they may appear to your minds. As they promise great benefits, they comprise great mysteries; if you cannot as yet comprehend them, still commence by believing. What could be more proper to dissipate any wrong idea, and to take away every pretext for incredulity?

(9) Many, and not all, as some interpreters state, who have even advanced that Saint Mark and Saint Luke were among the number of the deserters, although it is much more probable that they were not even among the number of the disciples. It is certain that several of these remained inseparably attached to Jesus Christ from his baptism until his ascension. We have a proof of it in these words of Saint Peter, Acts i.: *Wherefore of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day wherein he was taken up from us, one of these must be made a witness with us of his resurrection.*

teach the world that he had no need of any one, and that he only permitted in his retinue voluntary disciples. "He said then to the twelve: Will you also go away? Lord, answered to him Simon Peter, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life (10). We have believed, and have known that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

As chief of the apostles, he made this answer in the name of all the others, and in it we recognize, at the same time, his faith, his hope, and the love which made him prefer Jesus Christ to every thing else. We may also remark here the virtuous inclination which he had to judge favorably of his colleagues; for he does not seem to doubt that they were all of the same sentiments as himself. Yet in that he was, of course, mistaken; and, as it was relevant to the glory of Jesus that they should not think he was ignorant at any time of what any one amongst them either was, or should shortly become, "he answered them: Have not I chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil; now, he meant Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for this same, who was one of the twelve, was about to betray him." But Jesus did not point him out, so that the apprehension of being one day the unhappy criminal of whom he spoke, might make them all both watchful and humble.

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(10) These words of Saint Peter are as the repetition of those words of the Saviour: *My words are spirit and life.* Apparently Saint Peter did not understand any more than the others the mystery which Jesus Christ had just proposed; but he believed that his Master said nothing but the truth, and promised nothing but what was good. That was enough for the time.

CHAPTER XXVII.

COMPLAINTS OF THE PHARISEES.—THEIR TRADITIONS REJECTED.—CURE OF THE CANAANEAN WOMAN'S DAUGHTER.

(*a*) "AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for he would not walk in Judea (1), because the Jews sought to kill him. The Pharisees and some of the Scribes coming from Jerusalem, assembled together unto him; and when they had seen some of his disciples eat bread with common, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, holding the tradition of the ancients, eat not without often washing their hands; and when they come from the market, unless they be washed, they eat not (2). And many other things there are that have been delivered to them to observe, the washing of cups and of pots, and of brazen vessels, and of beds [*upon which they take their meals*] (3). Thereupon the

(*a*) St. John, vii. 1; St. Matthew, xv. 1, 2; St. Mark, vii. 1–6.

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(1) We have already seen that it was then the paschal season. Jesus Christ did not go to celebrate this passover at Jerusalem, as the law ordained. Besides that, he was not subject to the law; but, inasmuch as he wished so to be, a further reason is given for the dispensation, viz., the design which the Jews had of putting him to death. He might render it useless by his omnipotence; but he might also avail himself of the natural right which he had not to expose his life. We are not, therefore, rigorously obliged to perform external acts of religion, of which we could only acquit ourselves by exposing ourselves to some great peril. We must, nevertheless, except the case wherein the omission of the prescribed duty would be like a declaration of infidelity or apostacy. Then, should it cost life itself, we are not the less bound to the exterior profession than to interior belief.

(2) We may profit by this lesson, and learn from the Pharisees to purify not the body, but the conscience, when we return from human intercourse; for it is rare to return thence without some blemish.

(3) In limiting their religion to these practices, they acted very wrong, and they are justly reproved. From thence occasion has been taken to declaim against superstitious practices. If the practices be such, the declaimers have reason; if they be not, the people should still be taught to connect the mind with them—that is to say, interior piety, without which religion is only a vain shadow, and a body without a soul. But let us stop here, and with these correctives let us always speak in favor of exterior practices, and never to condemn them. We might do without them, if we were pure spirits; but,

Pharisees and the Scribes asked him: Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread; but they eat bread with common hands."

Here we recognize the Pharisees, who at once set down as a criminal transgression what was not such; but supposing that it had been, still this reproach was visibly exaggerated. For they only had seen some of the disciples omitting the washing of their hands before meals, and they say to Jesus Christ, *thy disciples*, as if all were in fault. Then they call the Saviour himself to an account, although he might have had no part in the transaction. They should, therefore, had they wished to act equitably, have contented themselves with saying: We have remarked that *some of your disciples* do not wash their hands before eating. Is it you that have taught them to do so, or who authorized them so to act? After that they might have examined what fault there was in the like omission. But Jesus took a shorter way to confound them—that was, to reproach them directly with this senseless respect for their traditions, which induced them to sacrifice to these trifles the most sacred laws of religion and humanity.

(*a*) "He answering, said to them: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition (4)? For God said: Hon-

(*a*) St. Matthew, xv. 3–6; St. Mark, vii. 11, 12.

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since we have senses, we require sensible objects. There may be excess in this matter; but too little is another extreme, the consequences of which are, perhaps, more to be dreaded. It is a lesser evil to have religion surcharged with these practices, than to have no religion, which may happen when religion, divested of pious practices, has no longer any hold upon the senses. Here the accident clings so closely to the substance; and the accessory to the principal, that, in removing the one, you often make the other disappear. Let us remark further, that those who have declaimed most strongly against practices, and who have labored most to abolish them, are constantly heretics; whereas those who have multiplied them, if one may say so, to excess, are, after all, Catholics; and amongst those people who have either rejected them, or who have appeared most attached to them, we know which of the two have lost most of religion, or better preserved it. Let us endeavor always to preserve a just medium.

(4) We should remark that the Saviour only speaks here of those human traditions which are opposed to the law of God. To conclude from thence with Protestants, that all traditions should be rejected, is concluding from the species to the genus, and from the particular to the general. But, say they, the Catholic traditions are contrary to the word of God. This also is bad reasoning, since they give as a proof the very matter in

or thy father and mother: and he that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death. But you say: If a man shall say to his father and mother, Corban, which is, whatsoever gift proceedeth from me, shall profit thee [*he satisfieth the precept*]; and further, you suffer him not to do any thing for his father and mother. And he shall not honor them," that is to say, that he does not assist them in their wants, in which act consists the substantial honor and real homage due to them, that without which all the others are but vain ceremonies and a species of mockery: (*a*) "well you do make void the commandment of God, making void the word of God by your own tradition. Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying: This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men. For, leaving the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, the washings of pots and of cups, and many other things you do like to these."

The people were not within hearing of these answers, which were only addressed to the Pharisees. Yet there resulted from these answers a maxim wherewith it was proper that the world should be instructed. "Jesus therefore calling again the multitudes unto him, he said to them: Hear me, ye all, and understand: There is nothing from without a man that, entering into him, can defile him; but the things that come from a man, these are they that defile a man (5).

(*a*) St. Matthew, xv. 6; St. Mark, vii. 13; St. Matthew, xv. 7–9; St. Mark, vii. 8, 14–16; St. Matthew, xv. 11.

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question. There are indifferent traditions which may be preserved: there are bad ones which ought to be rejected, and good ones which should be retained. Our adversaries receive with us the sanctification of the Sunday, the baptism of little children, the validity of baptism by infusion. These points are not to be found in Scripture. If it be true that we must reject all tradition, and only receive what is in Scripture, we must also reject these points with all the rest. Why do they not do so? It is easy to see that, when they wish to reason against us, they talk nonsense; and when they act like us, they contradict themselves.

(5) We know the abuse which the heretics have made of this expression, in order to reject as superstitious the abstinence from flesh-meat prescribed by the Church. There are but too many Catholics who imitate in this point their conduct and their language. It is easy to answer both one and the other. What enters into man doth not defile him of itself and by its own nature, since every creature of God is good; but it may defile him by the violation of the law which interdicts its use. Thus Adam was defiled by the

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The meaning of this maxim is, that meat contains nothing in itself which is capable of staining the conscience of man, and that all blemish of this kind springs solely from the distemper of the heart. This was expressed in a way to enable the truth to be understood by meditating on the maxim; and Jesus Christ exhorts the people to do this. But it might occur to their minds that he wished to remove the distinction so known and so respected between clean and unclean animals. He was soon to do so; but the time was not yet come. This question did not even arise here: the question at issue here was, to know whether, supposing an individual used only the meats which were allowed, his conscience was purer or more sullied, in proportion as he should eat them with more or less cleanliness, rather than with purity. This is the case which was decided by the sentence which Jesus has just pronounced. Thereupon the Pharisees were highly scandalized. To make light of their traditions was fully sufficient to give offence to these proud men. But we may presume, from this Pharisaical spirit, which always contrives to give things the very worst construction, that they accused the Saviour of openly attacking the law which prescribed the choice of meats. The disciples were alarmed; perhaps they also were scandalized; for we shall see that they themselves did not at first comprehend their Master's meaning. Thinking it, therefore, proper to remonstrate with him on this subject, (*a*) "they came then and said to him: Dost thou know that the Pharisees, when they heard this word, were scandalized? But he answering, said: Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up (6): let them alone; they

(*a*) St. Matthew, xv. 12–14.

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forbidden fruit, and the Jews were so defiled by the use of the meats which were declared unclean. It is not, therefore, the food which produces the defiling; it is the dis obedience which *comes from man,* that is to say, which the heart engenders when the forbidden meat enters into man.

(6) Every doctrine which comes not from heaven, and which is merely the invention of the human mind: all teachers who have not received their mission from God, like the apostles and their successors.

are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind man lead the blind, both fall into the pit (7)."

Whenever it happens that, in doing good, we scandalize, if the scandal only proceeds from the malice of those who take scandal, we should despise it; but if scandal be taken through ignorance or through weakness, charity then obliges us to remove the apprehensions of the weak, and to enlighten the ignorant. The manner in which Jesus has just spoken of the Pharisees, shows us that he pursued the first line of conduct with respect to them. We have an example of the second in the condescension he evinced, by giving to his disciples the explanation which they demanded. (*a*) "When he was come into the house from the multitude, they asked him [*the meaning of*] the parable, and Peter [*who usually spoke for all*] said to him: Expound to us this parable. Jesus saith to them: Are you also without understanding? So are you also without knowledge. Understand you not that every thing from without entering into a man cannot defile him, because it entereth not into his heart, but goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy, purging all the meats? But he said that the things which come out from a man, they defile him (8); *for* the things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. For from within out of the heart of men come forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye [*of envy*], blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within; these are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands doth not defile a man."

(*a*) St. Mark, vii. 17–23; St. Matthew, xv. 15, 18, 20.

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(7) The blind man who takes another blind man for his guide, commits homicide upon himself. The blind man who offers himself to conduct another blind man, commits a double homicide.

(8) It is not necessary, in order that a man my defile himself, that the sin should come forth out of the heart: he may consummate the sin by interior consent, as Jesus Christ informs us, with respect to adultery, and, consequently, all other sins. If, therefore, he makes it here come forth from the heart, the reason is, that he speaks of what usually occurs; for, when the heart hath conceived iniquity, it makes an effort to bring it forth, that is to say, to carry into execution what it hath desired and projected. And if it doth not always commit the act, it is only because it is obstructed by a greater force, to which it yields, yet foaming with rage and vexation.

An expression which alone would suffice to prove what we have already said, viz., that Jesus Christ does not here enter on the question of meats forbidden or allowed, but that he merely speaks of the extravagant purifications of the Pharisees; and even what he does say of these is less for the purpose of condemning them, than to disabuse those who, relying on the decisions of their false doctors, imposed upon themselves as a conscientious duty these insignificant observances.

(*a*) "Jesus went from thence, and retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon." He did not wish to make himself known in this idolatrous country. The reason was (it is thought) for fear lest these people, being attracted by the rumor of his miracles, should bring to him their sick. He could not cure them without exceeding the bounds of his mission, and his natural goodness would find it painful to refuse them. In order to prevent this embarrassment, (*b*) "entering into a house, he would that no one should know it; and he could not be [entirely] hid (9). For behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those coasts, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, crying out, as soon as she heard of him, said to him: Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil: who answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying: Send her away, for she crieth after us." Now, by crying out, she made him known, the very thing that Jesus did not wish to happen, and this reason advanced by the disciples was highly proper to engage him to grant her speedily her request. Nevertheless, "he answering, said: I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel."

It would seem that the incident we have just related took place

(*a*) St. Matthew, xv. 21. (*b*) St. Mark, vii. 24–27; St. Matthew, xv. 22–25.

(9) Let us take care, lest we think that he had not the power to conceal himself. He merely took the precautions which human prudence usually employs to hinder one from being known. These precautions were not sufficient to keep his arrival in the country entirely unknown, as he had not absolutely desired such utter privacy; and it is true to say that he was known and unknown precisely as much as he wished so to be. Perhaps he wished to teach us that he does not always show himself to us, and that we must seek him with earnestness in order to find him. *Seek ye the Lord, and be strengthened: seek his face evermore.*—Ps. civ.

whilst Jesus was yet on his journey towards the house whither he meant to retire, as we have said. This woman, who still followed him, "came in [*after him*], fell down at his feet, and adored him, saying: Lord, help me" [*that is to say*], she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. Jesus was fully disposed to do so; but, in order to make it apparent that she was indebted for this favor to the greatness of her faith, "he said to her [*in a severe tone*]: Suffer first the children to be filled. For it is not good to take the bread of the children and to cast it to dogs. The woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician born." It is this idolatrous people who are here reckoned as dogs, in comparison with the Jews, who are styled the children. If the terms made use of by the Saviour with reference to the first are humiliating, they are not altogether discouraging. In them we may catch a glimpse of the fact, that the bread should be given to the idolaters when the children should have been sated or disgusted, and that time was not far distant. But a pagan woman could not divine this mystery, then unknown to the apostles; and a refusal accompanied with so much apparent contempt should have absolutely taken away from her every hope. It must be owned that we never have sharper wit than when we ask for what we desire with ardor. This poor mother had ingenuity enough on this occasion to make the reason of the refusal a motive of grace. Far, therefore, from desponding when Jesus appeared to confound her with the foul beasts: (*a*) "Yea, Lord," she answered "[*humbly acknowledging what she was*]; for [*she immediately adds*] the whelps also eat of the crumbs of the *children's bread*, that fall from the table of their masters." One single miracle wrought for a Gentile, in regard to the vast number of those which Jesus Christ had wrought for the Jews, was, in point of fact, like a crumb of bread dropped under the table, to which the domestic animals were fully entitled. "O woman, then Jesus said to her, thy faith is great; for this saying (10), go thy way; the devil is gone

(*a*) St. Matthew, xv. 27, 28; St. Mark, vii. 29, 30.

(10) Not because this expression was spiritual, but because it admirably expressed the faith and the humility of the virtuous Canaanean woman. We have seen, chapter xvi., note 25, and page 134, that God does not exact long prayers; neither does he require

out of thy daughter. From that hour her daughter was cured, and when she was gone into her house, she found the girl lying upon the bed, and that the devil was gone out." This is a remarkable narrative, which teaches us that a prayer animated by faith, accompanied by humility, and sustained by perseverance, is a stronger reason for God to hearken to it than all those which he may have to refuse it.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DEAF AND DUMB CURED.—MULTIPLICATION OF THE SEVEN LOAVES.—DEMAND OF A SIGN FROM HEAVEN.—LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

THE sacred writers mention no other act performed by the Saviour in that strange country. We know that all is not written, and it is very probable that he only wrought there the miracle we have just recounted. Besides the excellent instruction which the entire Church derives from this miracle on the efficacy of prayer, perhaps he also wished to teach his ministers that the salvation of a single soul was a fruit well worthy of a laborious mission; and we will not consider as useless the pains he gave himself to furnish us with this double lesson. Whatever might have been the cause, it is certain that he did not tarry in this country: (*a*) "and going out of the coasts of Tyre, he came by Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis."

"[*He was scarcely arrived there, when*] they bring to him one deaf and dumb, and they besought him, that he would lay his hand upon him. Jesus, taking him from the multitude apart, put his finger into his ears, and, spitting, he touched his tongue; then, looking up to heaven, he groaned." Because of the ardor of his prayer,

(*a*) St. Mark, vii. 31–37.

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that they should be eloquent. Studied discourses are of no avail before him whose ear listens only to the supplication of the heart.

or rather through compassion for our miseries; "and said to him: Ephpheta, which is, be thou opened (1). And immediately his ears were opened, the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right (2). Jesus charged them that they should tell no man (3); but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal did they publish it, and so much the more did they wonder, saying [*by way of opposition to the calumnies of the Pharisees*]: He hath done all things well; he hath made both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

(*a*) "Then Jesus, going up into a mountain, sat there; and great multitudes came to him there, having with them the dumb, the blind, the lame, the maimed, and many others; they cast them down at his feet, and he healed them. So that the multitudes marvelled, seeing the dumb speak, the lame walk, the blind see; and they glorified the God of Israel."

A circumstance similar to that in which they were placed some months previously, occasioned a miracle similar to this which was now operated. (*b*) "When again there was a great multitude, and had nothing to eat, Jesus, calling his disciples together, saith to them: I have compassion on this multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat. If I shall send

(*a*) St. Matthew, xv. 29–31. (*b*) St. Mark, viii. 1–10; St. Matthew, xv. 34, 36, 38, 39.

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(1) He speaks as God, after having prayed as man; elsewhere he speaks, and he prayeth not. Sometimes he heals solely by the imposition of his blessed hands; at other times, by the touch of his garments. It were useless to seek reasons for these different proceedings. It is enough to know that uncreated wisdom could not act without reason.

(2) The miracles are also mysteries; and what the power of Jesus Christ wrought visibly upon the bodies, his grace wrought invisibly in their souls. It is for this reason that the Church has made this action of the Saviour one of the ceremonies of baptism. The word *Ephpheta, be thou opened*, which the priest pronounces, when making nearly the same applications that Jesus Christ made upon the deaf and dumb man—this word, I say, signifies in this circumstance: Let thine ears be opened, in order to hear and in order to believe; and let thy tongue be untied, in order to confess the truth which you believe.

(3) With reference to secrecy commanded, and not kept, and to secrecy commanded regarding certain miracles, and not regarding others, see note 5, chapter xii., and page 92.

them away fasting to their homes, they will faint in the way, for some of them come from afar off. I will not [*therefore*] send them away fasting. His disciples answered: From whence can any one fill them here with bread in the wilderness?"

We are surprised to find that they could have forgotten the yet recent miracle of the multiplication of the five loaves, and that, instead of soliciting a similar one, natural means are the sole expedients which occur to their minds. Jesus did not pause to reproach them with this forgetfulness or this want of faith; the act he was going to perform was to be a substitute for that lesson. "He asked them: How many loaves have ye? Seven, they said, and a few little fishes. He then commanded the multitude to sit down upon the ground." It is presumed, and with reason, that they were ranged in companies, as at the other multiplication, so that the distribution might be orderly, and that the number of guests might be easily known. "Then Jesus, taking the seven loaves, giving thanks, he broke and gave them to his disciples for to set before them, and they set them before the people. And he blessed the few little fishes they had, and commanded them to be set before them. They did all eat and had their fill (4), and they took up seven baskets full (5) of what remained of the fragments. Now, they that had eaten were about four thousand men, besides children and women. Jesus dismissed them," in order to steal himself away from their applause, and also that they might not, like the other multitude, think

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(4) The bread, according to Saint Augustine, multiplied in the hands of Jesus Christ just as grain multiplies itself in the earth. If we wonder more at one multiplication than at the other, the reason is, that one is a daily occurrence, and the other a very extraordinary one. At bottom, it is the same miracle, and there is no greater subject for admiration in the one than in the other. Free-thinkers do not believe in the multiplication of the bread, because they have not seen it; if anybody who had not seen the multiplication of grain, refused to believe it, upon the report of witnesses worthy of credit, he would be regarded, with reason, as very silly. Yet this foolish man would only be precisely what free-thinkers are.

(5) Jesus Christ caused them to be gathered, in order that the whole extent of the miracle should be known, and also to teach them *not to throw away the gift of God:* a popular phrase, which comprises a highly moral and very religious meaning.

The circumstance of the seven baskets marks the difference of this multiplication from the preceding one, and prevents the two from being taken for one and the same miracle. This is a remark of Saint Chrysostom.

of declaring him king. "Immediately going up into a ship with his disciples, he came into the parts of Dalmanutha into the coasts of Magedan."

This country is situated on the eastern border of the sea of Galilee. Jesus wished to show himself there as elsewhere; for it is easy to see that his design was to make himself known to all the house of Israel, and that he did not wish that there should be one district of Judea unenlightened by his doctrine and his miracles. We can have no doubt of his having both preached and wrought miracles here, as in the other districts, although the evangelists do not say so; but what they do state, and we, after their narrative, is, that here, as elsewhere, he encountered opposition.

(*a*) "The Pharisees and Sadducees" were, as is well known, two irreconcilable sects. But when the object is to persecute the good, the wicked, no matter how much they disagree amongst themselves, are yet ready to combine together. These "came [*in concert*] to Jesus. They began to question with him. Then they asked him to show them a sign from heaven [*it is added*], tempting him." And, in point of fact, to ask for fresh proofs of what is already sufficiently proved, is not desiring additional light—it is merely seeking grounds whereon to raise objections. "Jesus answered, and said to them: When it is evening, you say, it will be fair weather, for the sky is red; and in the morning, to-day there will be a storm, for the sky is red and lowering. You know, then, how to discern the face of the sky, and can you not know the signs of the times (6)? And he said also to the multitudes: When you see a cloud rising from the west, presently you say, a shower is coming; and so it happeneth. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, there will be heat; and it cometh to pass. You hypocrites!" added he—whether he

(*a*) St. Matthew, xvi. 1–4; St. Mark, viii. 11; St. Luke, xii. 54–57.

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(6) The preceding passage is taken from Saint Matthew; what immediately follows is from Saint Luke. The latter, in the twelfth chapter, reports consecutively several expressions of the Saviour, detached one from the other, without stating the circumstances in which they were uttered, and the greater part of which were spoken on different occasions. We deemed, on account of the identity of the subject, that it was more natural to place this expression here, although several interpreters place it elsewhere.

addressed this word exclusively to the Pharisees and to the Sadducees, or whether the curiosity which led the people to desire a heavenly sign was mingled with Pharisaical malignity—"You hypocrites! you know how to discern the face of the heaven and of the earth; but how is it that you do not discern this time, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge that which is just?"

It is easy to see the tendency of this discourse. All the signs marked out by the prophets for the coming of the Messiah had appeared, or were actually appearing: the sceptre of Juda had passed away to strangers; they were just at the close of the seventy weeks foretold by Daniel. *The Messiah cometh*, said a simple woman of Samaria. So notorious was the fact. Therefore, the time was come; and nothing remained but to know who it was that they should acknowledge. The miracles of Jesus Christ clearly designated him, not only by the general evidence which ever results from miraculous deeds, but also because the particular species of miracles had been foretold, as constituting one of the characters of the Messiah, as he himself observed to the disciples of John. Now to say, after this, We will not recognize you, unless you show us some sign from heaven, if in jest, is an insult; if seriously spoken, it can only signify a decided and fixed design to believe nothing. So criminal a disposition caused the Saviour both grief and indignation: (*a*) "and sighing deeply in spirit, he saith: Why doth this generation ask a sign?" Afterwards, as if he had answered to himself internally that the motive which induced them to ask it rendered them unworthy of seeing it, he presently adds: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; *but*, amen, I say to you, a sign shall not be given it but the sign of Jonas (7) the prophet. Jesus, leaving them, went away again up into the ship, and passed to the other side of the water. When his disciples were come over the water, they had forgotten to take bread; and they had but one loaf with them in the ship. Jesus said to them, and charged them: Take

(*a*) St. Mark, viii. 12–15; St. Matthew, xvi. 4–6.

(7) That of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, figured by the egress of Jonas from the belly of the whale, wherein he had been inclosed during three days. Jesus Christ had already proposed this sign on an occasion similar to this.

heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and of the leaven of Herod (8)." This word *leaven*, which they took in its literal meaning, reminded them that they had not thought of laying in a store of bread. Whereupon they were filled with anxiety; for they were frequently on the borders of desert places, where it was impossible to procure it. (*a*) "And they reasoned among themselves, saying: We have taken no bread." Perhaps they had already proceeded to the length of mutual censure, which is reciprocally dealt out by parties who have committed a common fault, when "Jesus, knowing" their embarrassment, which they did not dare to discover to him, he went on to show them the considerably greater fault which they had then committed. "O ye of little faith, he saith to them, why do you think within yourselves that you have no bread? Do you not yet know nor understand? Have you still your hearts blinded? Having eyes, see you not; and having ears, hear you not? Neither do you remember, when I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of frag-

(*a*) St. Mark, viii. 16–20; St. Matthew, xvi. 8.

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(8) Saint Mark, who omits the Sadducees named by Saint Matthew, adds to the leaven of the Pharisees, that of Herod, or of the Herodians, of whom mention is made, page 113, and note 4 of chapter xv. Nothing is there said of their opinions, regarding which there is no settled information. Nevertheless, it has been conjectured that they may not have been different from the Sadducees. Here are the grounds of this conjecture: In all likelihood, the Herodians were only so denominated, on account of their attachment for the family of the Herods, who were the princes of the country. The Herodians were, therefore, men connected with the court, or courtiers. Now Josephus, Book II. of the Jewish War, chapter vii., states, that the sect of Sadducees was but little diffused, but that it was the sect of the aristocracy. On the other hand, we learn from the Gospel that the Sadducees were pure materialists, who not only denied the resurrection, but who did not acknowledge that any spiritual substance existed in the universe. Here, then, we have in this aristocracy the condition, as well as in this materialism the religion, of many courtiers; therefore, if we like to draw the conclusion, the Sadducees were Herodians. If it be further inquired, whether these amongst the aristocracy were men who joined themselves to the Pharisees, in order to put captious questions to the Saviour, it is not only possible that some amongst them may have done so, but we may answer, moreover, that the aristocracy were not the only members who composed the sect of the Sadducees. They were, indeed, the heads of it; but we may also presume that Sadduceeism was the religion of their clients, their parasites, and their servants, not to speak of those who, not having it in their power to equal them in riches, may have wished to resemble them by dissoluteness of mind and morals.

ments you took up? They say to him: Twelve. When, also, the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets of fragments took you up? They say to him: Seven."

This was sufficient to make them ashamed of their embarrassment. But if they were not to be anxious about bread after the two miracles of which they had just been witnesses and co-operators, Jesus Christ, the author of these miracles, whose arm was not shortened, was still less disposed to think of such things. They should, therefore, when he spoke of leaven, have understood it in a sense different from what the word usually presents to the mind. This is what he made them remark: "He said to them [*when terminating this conversation*]: Why do you not yet understand that it was not concerning bread I said to you: Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? Then [*at last*] they understood that he said not that they should beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees (9)."

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(9) Jesus Christ said elsewhere: *The Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses; all things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do;* thus openly authorizing their doctrine, which is, nevertheless, condemned here. This shows that discrimination should be used between the doctrine of Moses, when the Pharisees expounded it, and their own particular doctrines, when they proposed them. It was incumbent on the hearer to receive the first, and to reject the others. All this is signified by the words of the Saviour—*Beware,* which doth not mean to convey: Reject all that they say, or close your ears, lest you should hear them; but listen to them with precaution and discernment. Those who shall say that this discernment was a difficult and anxious thing, shall recognize a truth which must make known to them, at the same time, the obligation which they owe to God for having spared them the trouble and the dangers. For when the Church instructs us by means of those whom God hath established her chief pastors, all is pure and sound, and should be received without distrust. Hence there is no reason for reading the works of heretics, saying that the reader profits by what is good, and passes over what is bad; for people are to be found, who deem themselves authorized to do so, by the permission which Jesus Christ grants to hear the Pharisees when using this discrimination. This was profitable to the Jews, who had no other teachers; but we who have others, teaching truth pure and unalloyed, why should we perplex ourselves, by fishing out truth from amid a thousand errors, at the risk of still falling into mistake? There is no imprudence in availing ourselves of a bad guide, when we have no other, and that we must have one; but when we have found one who is a sure guide, to leave him, for the purpose of taking another guide who may mislead us, because he also *may* not go astray, is not merely temerity, but extravagance.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE BLIND MAN OF BETHSAIDA.—CONFESSION OF SAINT PETER.—PROMISE OF THE KEYS.—PASSION FORETOLD.—PETER REBUKED.—SELF IS TO BE RENOUNCED.—THE CROSS MUST BE CARRIED.

(*a*) "[*From the place where they disembarked*] they came to Bethsaida, where they bring to Jesus a blind man, and they besought him that he would touch him." As this was one of those miracles which he did not wish to make public, "taking the blind man by the hand, he led him out of the town; and spitting upon his eyes, laying his hands on him, he asked him if he saw any thing. The blind man looking up, said: I see men as it were trees walking." This answer shows us that he was not born blind, since he had a distinct idea of men and trees. "After that again, Jesus laid his hands upon his eyes, and he began to see [*better*], and was restored, so that he saw all things clearly. After that, Jesus sent him into his house. Go into thy house, he said, and if thou enter into the town (1), tell nobody (2)."

This is a remarkable cure, being the only one which Jesus wrought by degrees. It is commonly attributed to the disposition of the blind man, whose faith, at first feeble, only attained for him an imperfect cure, subsequently perfected with his faith, so that he did not

(*a*) St. Mark, viii. 22–27.

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(1) The *borough* of Bethsaida is also called *city* by Saint John. It was one of that middle class of places which may receive either one or the other appellation.

(2) Was it simply in order that the miracle should remain a secret in the country, that Jesus Christ forbid the blind man to speak of it in Bethsaida, or did he wish to conceal the knowledge thereof from the inhabitants, in order to punish them for the little fruit which they had derived from the great number of miracles which he had wrought amongst them? this is a matter of uncertainty. The second conjecture is usually grounded upon these words of the Saviour, St. Luke, x. 13: *Woe to thee, Corozain! woe to thee, Bethsaida! for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the mighty works that have been wrought in you, they would have done penance long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.* See note 14, chap. xxii., p. 178; the contempt of miracles punished by the cessation of miracles.

see clearly but when he believed firmly. Thus, Peter walked upon the waters when he believed without hesitating; and when he commenced to doubt, so also he commenced to sink. Certain it is, and we think we have already said so, that miracles usually follow faith, and proportion themselves to it. Nevertheless, the Saviour may have had other reasons for pursuing the course he adopted on this occasion. One is, for example, that he wished to draw a picture of the sometimes slow and gradual advances of his grace, which, when it makes the soul pass from darkness to light, has, if we may venture to speak, its twilight and its aurora. Happy he who is not disheartened at its lingering approach, who knows how to take advantage of its first rays, and to quicken, by an increase of faith, the bursting of its full dawn.

(*a*) "From Bethsaida Jesus went out with his disciples into the towns in the quarters of Cesarea Philippi (3). In the way, as he was alone praying," that is to say, apart from the crowd, or without being followed by it, for "his disciples also were with him," he asked them, saying: "Whom do men say that the Son of man is?" It seems that the prejudices of the people as to who Jesus might be were not different from those of Herod and his court, since "they said: Some, John the Baptist; some say, Elias, and others, Jeremias; others say that one of the former prophets is risen again (4). Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered, and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God (5). Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father

(*a*) St. Matthew, xvi. 13–19; St. Luke, ix. 18–21; St. Mark, viii. 27–29.

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(3) Previously *Paneas*, but called Cesarea by Philip the tetrarch, who wished to court favor with the Emperor Tiberias. The surname of Philip has been given to it, in order to distinguish it from another Cesarea, rebuilt and magnificently embellished by Herod the Great, in honor of the Emperor Augustus. This latter city, which was situated on the borders of the Mediterranean, was previously called the Tower of Straton.

(4) Or perhaps because the soul of some of these great men had passed into his body; for a belief in the transmigration of souls was current among the Jews, as appears by the books of their Talmudists and their Cabalists.

(5) More than were John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremy, and the prophets; therefore more than by adoption; therefore by nature.

who is in heaven." Then rendering testimony to him in return for testimony, but with this difference, that Peter only declared what Jesus was, instead of which Jesus made Peter what he declared he was: "And [*he added*] I say to thee that thou art Peter (6), and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (7). I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." After this double testimony, which comprehends, in an abridgment, all religion—one being the groundwork of Christian faith, and the other that of Catholic unity—(*a*) "Jesus strictly commanded his disciples that they should tell none that he was Jesus the Christ." We have already said that Jesus only wished to lead men gradually to the knowledge of his divinity.

It does not appear that the disciples divulged the secret which they were so solemnly charged to keep. But, assured at last of the divinity of their Master, and still prepossessed with the flattering idea of his temporal reign, their imagination revelled in the glory and the pleasures which his divinity and earthly reign seemed to announce to them. Jesus took this opportunity to disabuse them, by informing them that his quality of Christ should not hinder him from dying in extreme torture, and that he would only recognize as his true disciples those who would participate in his opprobrium and suffering. Two truths, the first of which was to shake

(*a*) St. Mark, viii. 30; St. Matthew, xvi. 20.

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(6) This name had already been given to him, see page 116; but the prerogatives appertaining to it had not as yet been declared to belong to him. Jesus Christ wished, for the glory of Saint Peter, to be indebted to him for the merit of the confession.

(7) The powers of hell, according to the common interpretation. Nevertheless, since the gates of hell are merely defensive forces, and the reference here is to offensive forces, inasmuch as what is here said shall not prevail, is the unsuccessful attack, according to this expression of Jeremy, i. 19: *They shall fight against thee, and shall not prevail*, this difficulty has made the interpreters seek for another sense. It has been thought that this name might be given to those who carry off a great number of souls to hell, and more particularly to the authors of schisms and heresies, who wage a more open war with the Church. These perverse men may justly be termed the gates of hell, as Jesus Christ is called the gate of heaven. This explanation is plausible, even if it be not a true one.

the very foundation-stone of the new edifice which Jesus was to cement with his blood; which circumstance did not hinder him from proposing both one and the other without any temporizing: for (*a*) "that time he began to show to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things, be rejected by the ancients, by the chief priests and the Scribes, be put to death, and after three days rise again, and he spoke the word openly. And Peter, taking him, began to rebuke him, saying: Lord, be it far from thee; this shall not be unto thee." Out of love did he thus speak, and this motive might render him excusable; but his vivacity, too highly savoring of nature, must be suppressed, being calculated to lead to the ultimate result of obstructing the great work for which the only Son of the living God had made himself man. "Jesus, therefore, turning about, and seeing his disciples," whom he wished to render witnesses of the reprimand which he was going to make to their leader, in order that they might profit thereby, "he threatened Peter, saying: Go behind me, Satan (8)! thou art a scandal unto men, because thou savorest not the things that are of God, but that are of men (9)."

(*a*) St. Matthew, xvi. 21–23; St. Mark, viii. 31–33.

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(8) This word, in holy language, properly signifies *adversary;* we often find it used in this sense in Scripture. It is appropriated to Lucifer, because he is the capital enemy of God and of men. Those who wish to spare Saint Peter this odious denomination, have asserted that it was Satan himself whom the Saviour then apostrophized. Their intention is praiseworthy; but what follows being addressed evidently to Saint Peter, the figure would be too violent, if the preceding expression were addressed to another. There is nothing to hinder the Saviour from having said to Saint Peter: Thou art executing against me the office of Satan; thou art a tempter to me. The motive which induced this apostle to speak was good; but what he uttered was not so. The error is justly reproved, and the person is not the less loved, as we shall soon see.

Those who, for the purpose of avoiding what is opposed to the accomplishment of the designs of God upon them, do earnestly repel the assaults which a tenderness savoring too highly of natural impulse may direct against them, are more than justified by this answer of the Saviour.

(9) Men only relish glory and pleasure, and God wishes them to prefer humiliations and sufferings. But these sufferings are repaid them by infinite pleasures, and these humiliations are followed by immortal glory. God, therefore, wishes substantially the same things which we desire; but he wishes the pain to precede the recompense: what can be more just? and as to the sacrifice of the fleeting for the eternal, what can be more reasonable? Men, on the contrary, wish to share the recompense without sharing the

Peter did not venture to reply, and the disciples, instructed at his expense, remained in respectful silence: then Jesus passing on to another truth, which was the sequel of the preceding one, informed them that it was only by humiliations and sufferings that they could be true disciples of an outraged and crucified Messiah.

But as this startling precept did not merely regard the apostles, but generally all those who wished to embrace the new Gospel, (*a*) "Jesus calling the multitude together with his disciples, he said to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself (10), take up his cross (11) daily (12), and follow me." This renunciation

(*a*) St. Matthew, xvi. 24.

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pain: could any thing be more unjust? And, reduced to the dilemma of choosing between both, they quit the solid for the frivolous, and what is to last forever for what has merely a temporal duration. Could any thing be more unreasonable? Oh, how wise is the folly of the Gospel, and how silly is the wisdom of the world!

(10) What follows in the text explains what sort of renunciation is rigorously binding; but there are several degrees of perfection. To renounce one's self, in order to follow the counsels of Jesus Christ, is, undoubtedly, a much higher degree than to renounce self, in order to obey his commandments; in this consists religious renouncement, which is merely the commencement of perfection. To renounce one's self in every thing which is forbidden, when this renunciation is not absolutely necessary—to deny one's self all innocent satisfactions, to refuse ourselves those pleasures which are allowed, to check all our inclinations, to master all our propensities, to repress even the slightest sallies of nature—in a word, to be constantly disposed to sacrifice every thing without reserve—I mean not only to the commandments of God, nor even to his counsels, but also to every thing that we may presume to be most agreeable to him—this is the perfection to which the saints unceasingly tend, because they always long to arrive at it. It is the death of self-love, if we should not rather call it the life and resurrection of self-love, being the perfect transformation thereof into the will of God.

(11) It is not his cross that Jesus Christ obliges us to carry; it is our own, which is much lighter than his. But, moreover, it is not he who imposes this charge upon us: the condition of this life renders it inevitable, and what he requires from us is to the very letter that we should make a virtue of necessity. When we thus carry our cross in the train of our Saviour, that is to say, by imitating his patience, he also softens the burden by the unction of his grace, and he himself comes to our assistance and enables us to bear its weight. How many souls bear testimony that they find it as delicious as it is meritorious to them! whilst those who bear it with impatience groan under the load, and make for themselves a double hell, viz., that of this life, and that of the other. Since we must suffer in one way or another, is it not more rational to save ourselves by suffering less, than to damn ourselves by suffering more?

(12) If each day has its pain, each day should also have its patience. This is said for those persons who have their good and bad days, like intermitting fevers.

extends to every thing which may be any obstacle to the observance of the law of Jesus Christ. Even life itself is not excepted; for we must be disposed to lose it, rather than preserve it by a single prevarication. What more revolting to nature? we may even say, what less reasonable to the eyes of carnal prudence? Yet there is nothing more rational or more salutary. (*a*) "For [*adds the Saviour*] whosoever will save his life [*at the expense of what he owes to me*], will lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel, shall save it (13): for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

To feel the full force of this reasoning, we should remark that the Saviour seems to suppose a man who would give his life for some one, or even for all the goods of this life. It is evident that this man would be a fool, since by losing his life he would be no longer in a position to enjoy what he might acquire at this price; and this incapacity of enjoyment would be the result of his own act—bereaving him of all right of possession, and even of his own existence. Now such, and a thousand times worse, is he who saves his life at the expense of his soul, that is to say, who preserves the present life by the sacrifice of that which is to come. It may be said that he saves nothing, since he must necessarily lose whatsoever he saves, and that the moment shall come when he shall be in this regard just in the same position as if he had not saved it; but, at the same time, he shall find that he has lost every thing, since the life which he shall have lost must last eternally; and that, in this eternal duration, there will not be one instant in which it may not be said in truth to him: He has lost all. Whereas, the man who shall have sacrificed his life to his duty, shall find that he has lost nothing, since what he has lost must necessarily have perished, and he shall have gained every thing by gaining an eternal life, and one, too, of eternal hap-

(*a*) St. Mark, viii. 35–37.

(13) Here all the potentates of the earth fall short. Not one of them was ever able to say: Those are gainers who lose their lives in my service. Nevertheless, those may be gainers who lose their lives in the service of a prince; but this is when, in the service of the prince, they only have in view the service of God; and it is not then the prince, it is God alone who promises and gives the recompense.

piness. Jesus Christ speaks directly of the sacrifice of life, because this alone comprises all the others; and, moreover, because the profession of Christianity was going to be, by reason of the persecutions which should arise, a proximate occasion for the sacrifice of life. It was necessary to prepare the new disciples for this; but, in order to do so in the most effective manner, and to counteract fear by a greater fear, he parades before their eyes the formidable display of that great judgment in which he is to overwhelm, with the weight of his eternal indignation, those cowardly disciples whom the sight of torments and of death frighten into a shameful apostacy. It is for this purpose that, immediately after the last words which we have recorded, he uttered these: (*a*) "For he that shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also will be ashamed of him, when he shall come in his majesty, and that of his Father, and that of his holy angels. For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then will he render to every man according to his works. Then [*addressing his words to his disciples alone*] he said to them: Amen, I say to you, there are some of them that stand here that shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God in power, the Son of man coming in [*the splendors of*] his kingdom."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.—RETURN OF ELIAS ANNOUNCED.—CONTRAST OF JESUS CHRIST'S HUMILIATION WITH HIS GLORY.

This magnificent promise was not slow in being fulfilled; for we believe, with the majority of ancient interpreters, that it was accomplished in the transfiguration. Those who choose to find its accomplishment in the establishment of the Church on the ruins of the old Jerusalem, have not borne in mind that the Son of man did not there exhibit his person; and still it is here said that he shall be seen.

(*a*) St Mark, viii. 38, 39; St. Luke, ix. 26; St. Matthew, xvi. 27, 28.

Others have thought that the state in which he appeared after his resurrection, and still more the glory which accompanied his ascension, suffice to verify the prediction. It may be so; but then he was seen by all his disciples, and here it is said that he shall only be seen by some. Lastly, the accomplishment has been referred to the last judgment; and all here would be consistent, if some of his disciples were never to have died; but we know that this privilege was not granted to any one of them, for it has been long ago recognized that the pretended immortality of Saint John is merely a popular notion, without any solid foundation. There remains, then, but the transfiguration, on which occasion some of those who were present had the advantage of seeing Jesus, not in the actual exercise, but in the lustre of his power, that is to say, such as he shall appear on that great day when his dazzling splendor shall efface the light of the sun, and all the glory of earth and heaven. We have said that the Saviour was not slow in accomplishing his promise; in fact, (*a*) "about eight days after these words (the preceding discourse) (1), Jesus taketh with him [*his three favorite disciples*] Peter, and James, and John his brother, he bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves [*whither he went up*], to pray. Whilst he prayed, the shape of his countenance was altered (2), and he was transfigured before them. His face did shine as the sun. His garments became shining and glittering, and exceeding white as the snow, so as no fuller upon earth can make white. Behold, there appeared two men, who were talking with him. They were Moses and Elias (3). Appearing in majesty, they spoke [*of his passion and*] of his decease,

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 28–33; St. Matthew, xvii. 1, 2; St. Mark, ix. 1, 2.

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(1) It is Saint Luke who has said *about eight days after*. Saint Matthew and Saint Mark say *six days after:* they all agree. Saint Luke includes the day when Jesus held the discourse, and that on which the event took place, while the two other evangelists do not reckon them.

(2) The shape of his countenance was altered, viz., not on account of the features, which were still the same, but on account of the lustre and the majesty.

(3) It is certain that Elias was present in body and soul. We are ignorant whether the same was the case with regard to Moses. God might equally have resuscitated him, or formed for him a body from air, like that which angels assume when they appear in a visible form.

that he should accomplish in Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep [*which strengthens the conjecture of those who think that this occurred in the evening*]. Waking, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. As Moses and Elias were departing from him," charmed with the glory of his Master, and tasting a part of the joy with which he fills the saints who see him in all his lustre, "Peter saith to Jesus: Master, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles: one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias (4)."

How could glorified men, such as were Moses and Elias, require a dwelling to be prepared for them upon earth? And had the Son of man descended merely to fix his residence upon a mountain, away from the view and commerce of men? Peter's proposal, therefore, was unreasonable: indeed, it is added that (*a*) "he knew not what he said, for," besides the surprise and joy which had seized upon them, he and his companions "were struck with fear." Nevertheless, his desires were in some way accomplished. "As he spoke these things, there came a bright cloud, which [*overshadowing them like a celestial tabernacle*] covered them over [*with its shining rays. Moses and Elias sank into the cloud and disappeared.*] When they entered into the cloud, the apostles were [*still more*] afraid. And lo, a voice came out of the cloud, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. Whilst the voice was uttered, Jesus was found alone [*in order that there might be no doubt that the voice spoke of him only*]. The disciples hearing, were very much afraid, and fell upon their face. But Jesus came and touched them, and said to them: Arise, and fear not. Then lifting up their eyes, and immediately looking about, they saw no one but Jesus alone," returned to his usual appearance—that is to say, that he again checked those torrents of light which strove continually to

(*a*) St. Mark, ix. 5–7; St. Matthew, xvii. 3–8; St. Luke, ix. 34–36.

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(4) Peter knew them by revelation, or it may be that they had some particular mark, which served to make them known to those who were acquainted with their history, nearly in the same way as we recognize them in pictures; or perhaps that Jesus, in the conversation which he had with them, and part of which the apostles may have heard, had named them when he addressed them.

overflow from his divinity upon his humanity. For the glorious state in which he had just exhibited himself was, if we may so speak, his natural state; and the miracle was, not that he should have appeared for some moments in this glory, which was proper to the only Son of the Father, but which, by an effect of his Omnipotence, he kept closed up within himself, and suffered it not to strike or dazzle mortal eyes.

(*a*) "As they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged his disciples not to tell any man what things they had seen till the Son of man shall be risen again from the dead." Of the several reasons which are assigned for this mysterious silence, the most simple, and perhaps, for that reason, the truest, is, that it was in the order of the divine decrees that the glory of the Man-God should not be fully manifested until after his passion; and, being the master of his own favors and graces, he did not wish to extend further the particular revelation which he had just made to his three most cherished disciples. They, without seeking for other reasons, had a sufficient motive for silence in the injunction which Jesus had imposed upon them. (*b*) "They held their peace, and told no man in those days any of these things which they had seen." Nevertheless, as they were not forbidden to speak of it among themselves, "they kept the word to themselves, questioning to one another what that should mean, When he shall be risen from the dead." Nothing was more clear; but because it had frequently happened that they had deceived themselves, by explaining the words of Jesus in the literal sense, they feared lest this sense should also deceive them on the present occasion.

The thought of his resurrection recalled to them the remembrance of his death. It appears even that they had caught a glimpse of the fact that his death was not far distant, and this state of things exceeded their comprehension. For as yet they had no idea of his second coming; and, believing his death to be the termination of all he was to do in this world, they were surprised not to see the accomplishment of an ancient prophecy, which, according to the notion of all their doctors, was infallibly to be a preliminary to the ex-

(*a*) St. Mark, ix. 8. (*b*) St. Luke, ix. 36; St. Mark, ix. 9.

ploits of the Messiah, and to the establishment of his reign on earth. This prophecy concerned the coming of Elias, whose arrival they did not see; for what had just occurred before their eyes was merely to be regarded as a brief apparition. To clear up the matter, (*a*) "they asked him, saying: Why, then, do the Pharisees and Scribes say that Elias must come first? He answering, said to them [*speaking of his second coming*]: Elias indeed shall come, and restore all things (5); and [*he also*] must suffer many things and be despised (6), as it is written of the Son of man. [*But lastly, if it must be necessary for each occurrence to have its own Elias, and in order to take away this pretext from the incredulity of the Jews*], I say to you [*added the Saviour*], that Elias is already come, that they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they had a mind, as it is written of him. So also the Son of man shall suffer from them. Then the disciples understood that he had spoken to them of John the Baptist."

Recalling to mind a part of what we have just read, we may remark that the grandeur of Jesus develops itself here with a magnificence which had never before appeared. His divine filiation is recognized and clearly confessed by the chief of the apostles. Then he himself displays before their eyes the superb pomp and formidable array of the great judgment in which, from the height of the throne of justice, where he shall appear, escorted by myriads of angels, he shall decree, according to the quality of the works, infinite

(*a*) St. Mark, ix. 10–12; St. Matthew, xvii. 11–13.

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(5) That is to say, that he shall bring the Jews to the knowledge of the true Messiah. It is the common idea, and it appears certain. The Jews also believe that Elias shall come, and that he shall re-establish all things; which coming, however, they understand in a manner very different from our way of conceiving the event. They expect from him the solution of all their doubts. This is their final reply to great difficulties. *Elias shall come*, say they, no longer knowing what to say.

(6) Elias shall be persecuted like Jesus Christ. We read in the 11th chapter of the Apocalypse, that the beast shall overcome the two witnesses, and kill them. The common opinion is, that Elias and Enoch are these two witnesses. Jesus Christ, by foretelling that the first shall endure treatment similar to his own, renders his death more than probable. The death of Enoch is not the less probable, if it were only by virtue of the common law, from which there is no likelihood of any man's being exempted, after the Author of life having condescended to subject himself to it.

joys or eternal punishments. And, lest they should think that this future state of things has been advanced gratuitously, he gives to some of them an assured pledge of the truth of his words, by showing himself to them in the lustre of his glory, even as he shineth in the highest heaven, whence his light diffuseth itself through the vast extent of the empyrean of which he is the eternal sun. But we may also remark, that his passion was very clearly foretold, and often alluded to, throughout the discourse. We see it at every moment flash out, as it were, from the midst of his splendor; thus forming a combination of light and lurid gloom, the contrast of which must have been, in the eyes of his disciples, a truly surprising spectacle. All this was for their instruction. The entire Christ should be presented to them; that is to say, with all his ignominy and all his glory. He had been announced as such by the prophets, reuniting in his person all the attributes of divinity and all the lowliness of humanity; and as such he had been denominated at one time the strong God; and at another, the last of men. Nothing so exalted as the throne of the divinity, and they point him to us seated thereon. Nothing so low as extreme punishment, and they declare to us that he shall be condemned to it. Such opposite extremes are to be found included in the name of Saviour. Jesus Christ was only to be such, according to the word of the angel, by saving his people from their sins. Now, he could only save therefrom by expiating them, and he could only expiate them by satisfying the divine justice, which required that the debt contracted should be rigorously paid. Hence it was requisite that there should be a subject capable of humiliation and of suffering, and he who was simply God could not be such. This subject should also be of dignity so eminent as to impart to his humiliation and sufferings merit proportioned to the infinite justice which he was bound to satisfy, and this merit was infinitely higher than any merely created being could deserve. Therefore, a Christ was necessary; that is to say, a Man-God, and a Christ humbled and suffering; for this explains the entire mystery. Now-a-days, even children know this truth; yet the apostles could not comprehend it. But the time was not yet come to confer upon them the gift of intelligence. Jesus Christ only endeavored, as may be said, to deposit the ideas thereof in the treas-

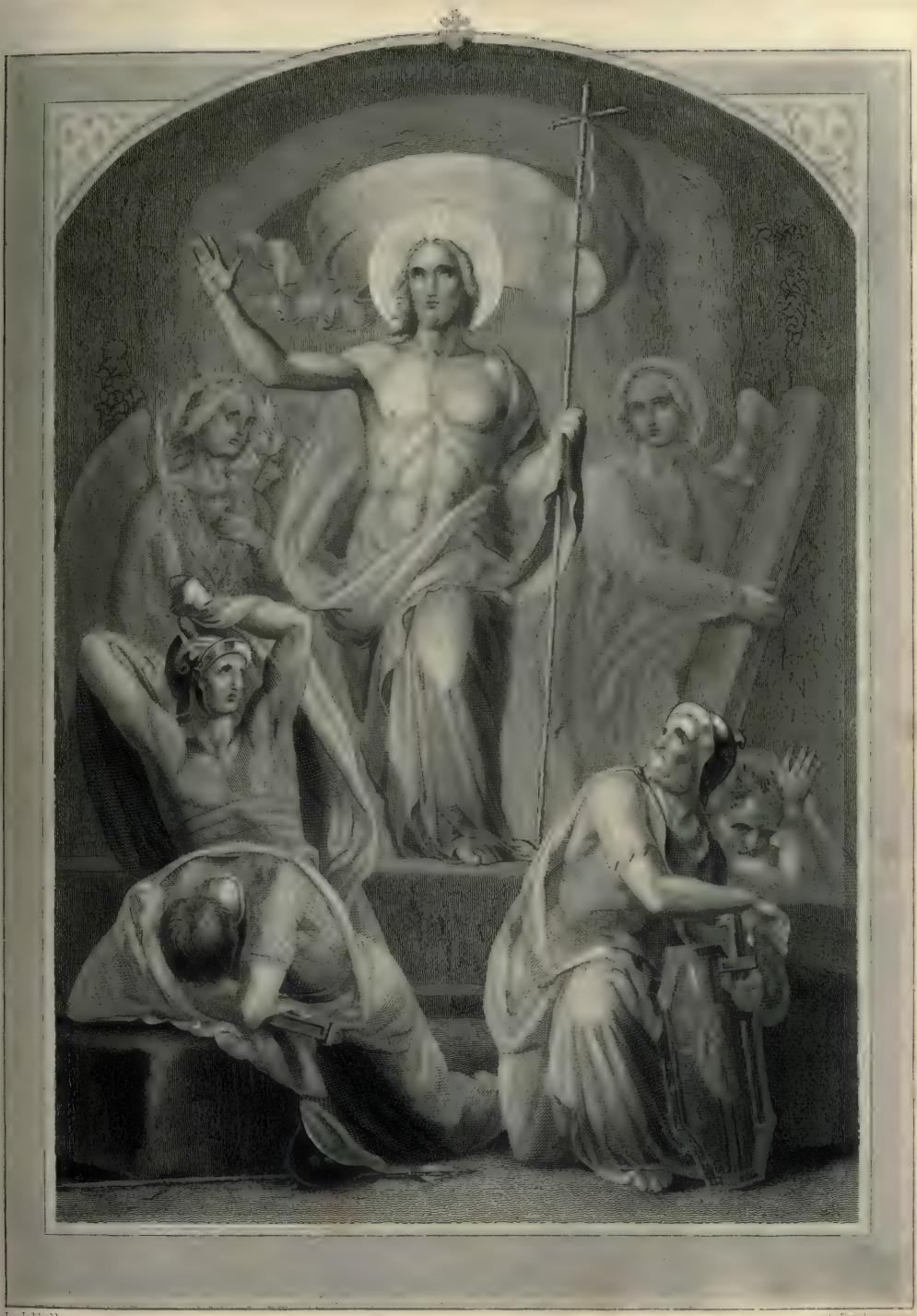
ury of their memory, where they were to remain buried until the Holy Ghost came to arrange the confusion, and dissipate the obscurity of this secret depository. Thus this spirit of light was to co-operate in the manifestation of the evangelical mysteries; and the Saviour likewise teaches us, by this conduct, that exterior teaching only profiteth inasmuch as it is accompanied by interior light—a truth which renders it obligatory on us to pray for the latter without ceasing. It was not, therefore, without reason nor without fruit that Jesus Christ announced to his disciples certain truths, of whose connection and expediency he left them in ignorance. His function was to engrave in their souls the mysterious characters of which the Holy Ghost was to furnish the key. They learned every thing from Jesus Christ, and they comprehended every thing by the Holy Ghost, who is only said to have taught them all things, because he made them understand those which they had already learned, and of which they knew not the meaning.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE LUNATIC CURED.—THERE IS A DEMON WHO CAN ONLY BE CAST OUT BY PRAYER AND FASTING.—ANOTHER PREDICTION OF THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST AND OF HIS RESURRECTION.—TRIBUTE PAID.

Jesus, and the apostles who accompanied him, passed the night upon the mountain. (*a*) "The day following, when they came down from the mountain, there met him a great multitude. Jesus coming to his [*other*] disciples, saw a great multitude about them. Presently all the people seeing Jesus, were astonished and struck with fear. Running to him, they saluted him, and he asked them: What do you question about among yourselves? [*Instantly, and before they had time to reply*], behold a man of the multitude cried out, falling down on his knees before him, answering: Master, I have

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 37–40; St. Mark, ix. 13–17; St. Matthew, xvii. 14, 15.



L. J Hallex

R. Duclaux

THE RESURRECTION

brought my son to thee, having a dumb spirit (1). I beseech thee, look upon my son, because he is my only one. Lord [*said likewise this afflicted father*], have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic (2), and suffereth much, for he falleth often into the fire, and often into the water. Lo, a spirit seizeth him, he suddenly crieth out: the spirit throweth him down, and dasheth him, so that he foameth and gnasheth with the teeth, and bruising him, the spirit hardly departeth from him, and my son pineth away. I brought him to thy disciples, and I desired them to cast him out, and they could not."

There can be no doubt but it was this that caused the subject of the dispute. The Scribes, being witnesses of the impotence of the disciples, thereupon prevailed against them, and apparently against their Master, from whom they said they held the power which had thus fallen short. The disciples, in their turn, had not had sufficient faith to expel the devil; and this failure, on so public an occasion, might well have discouraged them, and cast them into a state of despondency. The father, on his side, had as yet a very uncertain faith, as we shall presently see by his words. Thus we have good reason for thinking that to every one assembled there was addressed this expression of indignation, spoken by the mildest of men, after he had heard the recital of what had occurred: (*a*) "O faithless and perverse generation," said he to them, "how long shall I be

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 41–43; St. Mark, ix. 18–26; St. Matthew, xvii. 16, 17.

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(1) Jesus Christ calls him further on, *Deaf and dumb spirit.* He is designated by the effect which he produced, which consisted in taking away from this child the faculties of hearing and speaking.

(2) Because the demon tormented him at intervals. Perhaps his fits were regulated by the stated courses of the moon. If it be true, as several ancients assert, that he wished to conceal the possession by the symptoms of sickness, he dissembled his knavery very awkwardly; for we here see that no one had any doubt as to the possession of the child. To add to this, that what he had in view was to induce men to blaspheme against the Creator of the moon, whom they would have regarded as the cause of all the evil, is supposing in him an intention highly worthy of his wickedness; but such a trick was not deep enough for his subtle craft, since, after all, every one laid the matter to his charge, and no one blamed the moon. God had permitted the demon to take possession of this young man, and to torment him at intervals. The demon tormented him whenever he could, and to the utmost of his power, and always less than he wished. We must not seek for further mystery here.

with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring hither thy son," *he added to the father.* "They brought him. As he was coming, and when he had seen Jesus, immediately the spirit troubled him; the devil threw him down, and he rolled about foaming." Jesus permitted this, in order that the greatness of his power might be better known when the bystanders were made acquainted with the greatness of the evil, and because the knowledge of its continuance was also subservient to this end: "He asked his father: How long time is it since this hath happened unto him? From his infancy, said the father; and oftentimes hath the devil cast him into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But, if thou canst do any thing, help us, having compassion on us." He doubted whether the power was vested in Jesus, and Jesus informs him that by faith he himself might become all-powerful: "If thou canst believe, he saith to him, all things are possible to him that believeth. Immediately the father of the boy crying out, with tears, said: I do believe; Lord, help my unbelief (3). When Jesus saw the multitude running together, he threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee go out of him, and enter not any more into him. [*The demon obeyed, yet, still demon-like*], crying out, and greatly tearing him (4), he went out of him; and the child became as dead, so that many said: He is dead. But Jesus, taking him by the hand, lifted him up, and he arose; and the child was cured from that hour. Jesus restored him to his father. All were astonished at the mighty power of God."

Yet the disciples felt a secret heaviness of heart at this discomfiture before so numerous an assemblage. They could no longer, after this prodigy, suspect their Master of being powerless. Wishing,

(3) We may expect to be heard, when, having commenced by performing what depends upon ourselves, we request of God to do the remainder. *God doth not command impossibilities; but when he commands, he gives us notice to perform what is in our power, to ask for what exceeds our power or ability, and gives strength to enable us to perform it.*

(4) Image of the violent agitation which the devil excites in a soul which he is forced to quit. It is a species of agony through which we pass from death to life. Jesus is present, who tenders his hand, and aids us to raise ourselves. One is surprised to find himself, or rather another self, as different from what he was as peace is from trouble, and health from fever.

therefore, to know the cause of their own inability to perform the cure, (*a*) "When Jesus was come into the house, they came secretly to him, and asked him: Why could not we cast him out? Jesus said to them: Because of your unbelief." *Then, enlightened as to their own deficiency*, "the apostles said to the Lord: Increase our faith." We must presume that the Saviour heard from that hour, to a certain extent, a prayer which could have been inspired by him alone. But to the end that they might better prize so great a gift, and that they might learn to desire it with more ardor, and ask it with more earnestness, "the Lord said to them: If you had faith like to a grain of mustard-seed (5), you might say to this mulberry-

(*a*) St. Mark, ix. 27; St. Matthew, xvii. 18–20; St. Luke, xvii. 5, 6.

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(5) The majority of the ancients have thought that the Saviour meant to say a faith lively and ardent as the grain of mustard-seed. It is more likely that the comparison here is with reference to the smallness of the seed. Jesus Christ would have said nothing very wonderful by saying: If you have faith full of vivacity and ardor, you could remove mountains. The wonder is much greater, and the eulogium of faith much more magnificent, if it be asserted that its virtue is such that he who should be endowed with faith, even as small in quantity as is the grain of mustard-seed, would find nothing whatever impossible; and it seems that all the bystanders understood the comparison in this sense. But does it not follow from thence, that he who should not have that faith which may remove mountains, could have no faith at all, since, in point of faith, he would be inferior to a grain of mustard-seed, which is here given in comparison to represent the very smallest thing in the world? In reply to this difficulty, it may be said, that the question here is of faith perfect in its own species, viz.: the faith which excludes all hesitation and all doubt. As the virtues of creatures can never reach infinite perfection, so this faith, although perfect in its species, may still have or not have certain degrees of perfection. Nevertheless, if it happens to be of that species which utterly excludes distrust and hesitation, the possessor thereof, even in the lowest degree (which degree is compared in smallness to the grain of mustard-seed), would be sufficiently qualified to work the greatest prodigies. We thought we had hit upon the groundwork of this explanation in those words which Jesus Christ uttered on another occasion: *For, amen I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain: Remove from hence hither; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you.* —St. Matthew, xvii. 19.

An individual may have faith in mysteries without possessing the faith which worketh miracles. Still, it was a species of infidelity in the apostles not to have this faith; because, after Jesus Christ had conferred upon them the power of working miracles, and specifically that of expelling demons, it was no longer permissible for them to doubt as to this power being efficacious, every time the occasion arose for them to execute it. They committed nearly the same fault as Moses when he struck the rock twice; for,

tree [*there was one before their eyes*]: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea; and it would obey you. For [*said he further to them, to make them more sensible of the efficacy of faith*], Amen, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain [*this apparently was the mountain whereon he was transfigured, and which was visible from the spot where Jesus spoke*]: Remove from hence hither, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you." To this observation Jesus added another, which bore a more particular reference to the subject in hand: "But this kind of demon is not cast out but by prayer and fasting (6)."

Immediately after the scene on Thabor, Jesus turned his thoughts towards Calvary. He must go on to find it in Judea and at Jerusalem; but he wished to visit Capharnaum again before he left it, never to return. This was yet another grace which he accorded to that faithless city; and he who saw, with poignant sorrow, the loss of souls, whose salvation was about to cost him so much blood, required no other motive to undertake the journey. (*a*) "Departing from thence [*from the vicinity of the mountain, where they do not appear to have tarried more than one day*], Jesus and his disciples passed through Galilee; [*but, in order that he might not be retarded on his journey*], Jesus would not that any man should know it. When they abode together in Galilee, while all wondered at all the things he did, he taught his disciples, and said to them: Lay

(*a*) St. Mark, ix. 29, 30; St. Matthew, xvii. 21; St. Luke, ix. 44.

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said Saint Chrysostom, faith, even in the just themselves, is not always equally lively and immovable; it has its moments of weakness, wherein it doth not fall, but vacillate.

(6) It often occurs that the demons who possess souls cannot be expelled by any other means. *We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.*—Acts, vi. 4. They knew, therefore, the necessity of these means. Apostolical men, who have learned it from them and from their Master, always combine prayer with preaching; with the frequent addition of great austerities. Hell, attacked by such arms, does not long resist; but makes a mockery of those who employ mere words against it. They do not bear away from hell one of its victims; and, perhaps, the fiend does not despair of beholding the men of words become his prey. Prayer, unaccompanied by exhortation, will always be a more efficient means of conversion than exhortation without prayer: all the eloquence of orators could never have effected what was done by the tears of Monica.

you up in your hearts these words: The Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. They shall kill him, and after that he is killed he shall rise again the third day."

We see how ardently he desired that the idea of his greatness and wonderful deeds might not efface from their minds that of his opprobrium and suffering. Another reason is likewise given for these predictions, so often reiterated, of his Passion being near at hand. They taught his disciples that his Passion was to be purely voluntary (for it would have been no difficult matter for him who could foresee it to avoid it altogether), and they also served to prevent them from being scandalized. (*a*) "But the disciples understood not [*as yet*] this word; it was hid from them, so that they perceived it not (7);" [*and, fearing lest they should become more enlightened than they wished to be*], "they were afraid to ask him concerning this word." Yet the forebodings of woe which glimmered through these words to their minds was the cause that "they were troubled exceedingly."

Of all the acts which Jesus Christ performed at Capharnaum during this his last sojourn, the evangelists only report one fact, which comprises, besides a signal miracle, a deep fund of instruction. "They that received the didrachmas (8)," which every Jew paid

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 45; St. Matthew, xvii. 22, 26.

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(7) In vain are truths made clear to our understanding, when we do not relish them; we always, in such cases, find them out to be obscure. Such, with reference to the apostles, were the words of Jesus Christ, when he announced to them his sufferings and his death. They wounded the love which the apostles entertained for him; and they also disconcerted the views of their ambition, no longer knowing what they ought to expect from a crucified Messiah. They would, therefore, naturally desire that his words might not be verified. Moreover, we have already remarked, that they could not reconcile in their minds the vast power of their Master with such prodigious humiliation. The approaching establishment of his kingdom, placed in juxtaposition with the prediction of his approaching death, caused them also unutterable embarrassment. Thus they comprehended the terms of the prediction, which were clear; but they did not comprehend the thing itself, because they found it clashing with other things which they knew as clearly as that which appeared to annihilate those bright anticipations.

(8) The didrachma was the eighth part of an ounce, and was worth about fifteen sous of our (French) money. [A didrachma was half a *sickle*, or half a *stater*—that is, about fifteen pence English. See note to the second Douay edition, Dublin, by the Rev. George Leo Haydock.] Very possibly the Romans had already seized upon this tribute,

yearly for the support of the temple, "came to Peter, and said to him: Doth not your Master pay the didrachma?" It has been contended that this was one of those captious questions which were sometimes put to the Saviour, for the purpose of calumniating him; and that the parties addressed Peter, thinking that he would more easily fall into the snare than his Master. But as these malicious stratagems are more characteristic of the Pharisees than of the Publicans, whom we always see demeaning themselves well towards Jesus Christ, it is more natural to think that they put this question to the disciple out of respect for the Master: "Peter [*who was well acquainted with what Jesus was in the habit of doing on the like occasion*] said: Yes; [*my Master does pay the didrachma*]. When he was come into the house, Jesus, to whom nothing is unknown, prevented him, saying: What is thy opinion, Simon? The kings of the earth, of whom do they receive tribute or custom? Of their own children or of strangers? Of strangers, he said. Jesus said to him: Then, the children are free?" . And with much greater reason the only Son of the Father should be exempt from a tribute which, being imposed for the temple, is properly payable to God, who is there adored. This consequence flows from the species of parable

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which they subsequently appropriated to themselves. But, supposing this to be the case, was it impossible that the Jews should pay it twice over—once to the Romans, and a second time for the temple? The zeal which they entertained for the temple and for the Divine worship, renders this conjecture probable enough. True, the second contribution might then be regarded as voluntary; but do not even the collectors seem to insinuate as much, when, in lieu of exacting it absolutely, they content themselves with saying: *Doth not your Master pay the didrachma?* Yet what appears most decidedly in favor of the opinion which we have followed is, that we can no longer ascertain in what sense Jesus Christ saith that he is exempt from the tribute, on account of his quality of being the son of him to whom it is paid, if this tribute be not paid to God. Jesus Christ could never be called, in any sense, the son of the Roman emperors. But, it has been said, was he not the son of David? Yes; but remark, that it is not the sons of kings, generally speaking, who are here declared to be exempted from the tribute, but merely the children, *properly so speaking*, of the kings who exact it, viz., those who are not *strangers* in their regard. Shall it be asserted that the posterity of David were not strangers to the Roman emperors? Shall it be asserted that all this posterity—for the assertion here is not confined to the elder branch—was legitimately dispensed from paying the tribute to Cæsar? Is that reasonable? Yet that is the inference, if it be true that the quality of son of David dispensed Jesus Christ from paying the tribute to the Romans.

which Jesus had just proposed to Peter. No doubt he understood the meaning of it; he who, on one side, was not ignorant of the object of this contribution, and who, on the other, had so plainly confessed the divine filiation of his Master. "But [*added the Saviour*] that we may not scandalize them (9), go to the sea, cast in a hook, and that fish which shall first come up, take; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a stater. Take that, and give it to them for me and thee."

CHAPTER XXXII.

DISPUTE OF THE DISCIPLES ON PRECEDENCY.—EVANGELICAL CHILDHOOD.—HE WHO IS NOT AGAINST US IS FOR US.—SCANDAL.—NECESSITY OF RETRENCHING ALL THINGS WHICH ARE TO US AN OCCASION OF FALLING.—NOT TO DESPISE THE LITTLE ONES.—THE HUNDRED SHEEP.

THE disciples quickly forgot the subject of their affliction, to think only of what flattered them. Their ideas of ambition were not slow in reviving; and deeming themselves already great, because they reckoned on soon being so, the only doubt which remained on their minds was, who amongst them should have precedence over the others. (*a*) "There entered a thought into them [*to examine therefore*] which of them should be the greater." The question seemed already resolved in favor of Peter, whom the Saviour had declared the foundation of his Church, of which he was going to establish him the chief and first pastor. But Andrew had priority of voca-

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 46, 47; St. Mark, ix. 32–34.

(9) We have already spoken, chapter xxvii., page 213, of the scandal which is taken through malice, and which must be despised; and of that which is taken out of weakness, which we ought to humor. The scandal here was of the second species, and Jesus Christ, by humoring it as he doth, further induces us to believe the demand thereof was not made out of malice. The reason for not humoring the first is, that malice or wickedness would take scandal at such humoring, even although designed for the purpose of avoiding scandal. Every thing is scandal to him who wishes to take scandal.

tion, John the favor of his Master, and James his brother was admitted with him into the most intimate confidence. The other James, and those who, like him, were styled the brothers of the Lord, did not fail, apparently, to avail themselves of their relationship, which, according to the usual course in the kingdoms of earth, conferred a right to the highest rank. The majority, therefore, had some title for pretending to this rank; and who can doubt but that each one thought his own the best? The only title which could decide the matter, according to the principles of the new Gospel, was wanting in all, and Jesus availed himself of this occasion to let them know this truth: "Seeing the thoughts of their heart, he asked them when they were in the house: What did you treat of in the way? [*Pride betrays its shame, by fearing to discover itself.*] They held their peace, for in the way they had disputed among themselves, which of them should be the greatest. Jesus, sitting down, called the twelve. (*a*) The disciples came to him," and, thinking they had found a good opportunity to draw from him an explanation that might clear up their doubts, without acknowledging their ambitious pretensions, instead of asking who was greatest among them, "they say to him, [*leaving themselves, as it were, out of sight*]: Who, thinkest thou, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus saw more in these words than they seemed to express; and in order to reply, at the same time, to what they said and what they withheld, he pronounced this sentence, before which all pride must either bend or be crushed: "If any man desire to be first, he shall be the last of all, and the minister of all."

It follows, by an inverted series of reasoning, that he who wishes to be first and master of all, shall be the last of all. Thus, to attain the object of their pretensions, they had only to dispute between themselves who should most deeply humble himself, a species of dispute widely opposed to that in which they had been engaged, and a dispute which never yet engendered quarrelling. But in order to give them a sensible idea of that humility which he proposed to them as the only foundation for the highest elevation, (*b*) "calling unto him a little child, whom, when he had embraced, he set him in

(*a*) St. Matthew, xviii. 1; St. Mark, ix. 34.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xviii. 2–4; St. Luke, ix. 47; St. Mark, ix. 35.

the midst of them, [*then*] he saith to them: Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (1). Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child (2), he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven."

Infancy is the age of simplicity, of candor, and of innocence—those amiable qualities which a disciple of the Gospel should strive to have at every age; the possession will ever render him more beloved both by God and man. Nevertheless, it is not these charming virtues that Jesus Christ has directly in view in the words that have just been read; the question here is of a more sublime perfection; yet, at the same time, of less difficult practice. Children enjoy no high consideration in the world, and they do not desire it; they have the lowest rank in society, and they desire no other; every one commands them—even their very slaves, if they be in a condition of life to have such menial attendants—and they obey all: so it may be said with reference to them, that dependence is their natural state. This is the point of view in which Jesus Christ here admonishes the apostles to resemble them. A terrible effort this for human nature, which loves to command, and cannot bear to be commanded! But what renders it still more painful is, the advantage which men are too apt to take of this humble and submissive state of existence. If they find you always disposed to obey them, they will tyrannize over you; if you do not require any attention to be shown you, they will despise you; if you put yourself under

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(1) Catholic interpreters do not mean us to conclude from this expression, that the apostles would have been excluded from the kingdom of heaven, had they died in the state in which they then were; that is to say, they do not wish us to believe that they were in a state of damnation. Their pride had not yet reached that degree which renders it mortal; but it would have reached it, had they not suppressed it, and it would inevitably have caused their perdition. The Man-God infallibly foresaw this; but were he even an ordinary man, he might very reasonably have conjectured it. Every passion tends towards crime, and, when long fostered, is sure to end therein. Stifle in the first instance these rising monsters, if you do not wish one day to become their prey. *The lion's cub becometh a lion, and he learns to catch the prey, and to devour men.*—Ezechiel, xix. 3.

(2) Religious obedience, when perfect, is the perfection of this blessed infancy. Those who laugh at it, laugh at the uncreated wisdom; and those who condemn it, condemn the Gospel.

their feet, they will trample on you, and you may expect this treatment: and all the pride of the disciples must have been stirred up at the mere thought of the insupportable arrogance they would have to encounter, and the contempt they should be obliged to swallow. Jesus Christ is going to soften down this idea for them, by informing them that they shall be indemnified for this unjust contempt, by the esteem of his Father, by his own esteem, and by that of all the true children of God, in regard to whom he entitles them to the quality of his own and his Father's representatives, considering as done to his Father and to himself all the good treatment which his disciples shall receive from them. For it is difficult to find another explanation which can connect the preceding words of the Saviour with those which he uttered immediately after: (*a*) "He that shall receive one such child as this in my name, [*that is to say, a perfect imitator of his infancy*] receiveth me. Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me; for he who is the lesser among you all, he is the greater," and thenceforward the most worthy representative of me and of my Father.

Here we have one of those familiar conferences wherein, with the zeal of a master anxious for the advancement of his disciples, the Saviour evinced also the easy manner of a good father in the midst of his children. He does not find fault with them for interrupting him, and seems to think it no trouble to interrupt the discourse he had commenced, in order to give them the explanations for which they asked. Thus we will not be surprised that the well-beloved disciple should avail himself of the right which he granted to them all, or that, without waiting to see whether Jesus had any thing further to state on the subject which he was then treating, (*b*) "John answering, said: Master, we saw a certain man casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him (3), because he followeth not with

(*a*) St. Matthew, xviii. 5; St. Mark, ix. 36; St. Luke, ix. 48.

(*b*) St. Luke, ix. 49, 50; St. Mark, ix. 38, 39.

(3) John had, perhaps, in view merely to correct what he deemed disorderly: perhaps a little jealousy was also mixed up with this motive. The apostles were cured of this after the descent of the Holy Ghost. Such is not the case with all those who have succeeded them in their ministry. There are but too many who are not utterly exempt

us." John wished to know whether he had acted right or wrong. Jesus satisfied him without delay. "Do not forbid him, he said to him, for there is no man that doth a miracle in my name and that can soon speak ill of me (4). For he that is not against you is for you (5)."

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from that unhappy emulation, which turns us away from any good which is not done by ourselves or by our own friends. How much good has it not prevented? And can we here refrain from exclaiming with the wise man: *Do not withhold him from doing good who is able; if thou art able, do good thyself.*—Proverbs, iii. 27.

(4) It is even impossible that he should think any thing of the sort, having before him present and incontestable proof of the Saviour's divine power. But were he capable of speaking evil of him, he could not do so at the outset. Could he blaspheme a name by virtue of which he is actually operating prodigies? Even those who would chiefly be opposed to this name, if they retained the slightest integrity, would manifest their indignation at such inconsistency, and reproach him with it to his very face.

Hypocrites sometimes defend the cause of religion, because they find it their interest to do so, which interest is at bottom their sole religion. They will not dare to attack openly what may have publicly been defended—at least they will not dare to do so immediately, and when they do, it will be partially and with precaution, and this in order that they may not be recognized for what they are, viz., as hypocrites, and so much mischief will be thereby avoided. But if you urge them too strongly with reference to their motives—if you leave no resource to their honor—in fine, if you tear away their mask, you deprive them of the only curb whereby they were restrained: they have nothing further to lose; they will attack openly, and they will persecute in an outrageous manner.

(5) We must here reconcile this expression with that other one of the Saviour: *He who is not with me is against me.*—Matthew, xii. It would seem that by neutrality we should be at the same time for and against Jesus Christ. This is what we are going to try and explain. Let us distinguish real and interior neutrality from that which is exterior and apparent. By the first, men were against Jesus Christ. Those who, witnessing his miracles, doubted the truth of his words, or remained indifferent in his regard, were against him in this sense—that they refused him the faith and the devotion which they owed him, and which they could not fail tendering to him without a crime. It is with reference to these he said: He who is not with me is against me. As to what regards exterior and apparent neutrality, we must remark the circumstances in which they then found themselves. The new Gospel was then persecuted, because there was a greater and more accredited one in the nation. A person could with impunity declare himself opposed to it, and there was no security in openly undertaking its defence. How many timid souls recognize the truth, and do not dare to confess it, for fear of encountering the brunt of persecution! It is of the latter that Jesus Christ saith: *He who is not against you is for you.* Such was Nicodemus, who always has had, during stormy periods, and who always shall have, many imitators of his timid concealment, if we may be permitted to use this term. They are weak, but they are not unfaithful. Do not let us make them more wicked than they are. They are for us: let us not proceed to turn

It follows, that if the smallest act done for the least of those who belong to Jesus Christ shall have its recompense, how much more should he be rewarded who, by the miracles which he does in his name, is instrumental in making known his power, and extending his glory! Thus, instead of blaming and opposing him, the apostles should praise and encourage him; they should treat him in the same way that Jesus Christ wishes they themselves should be treated for his sake. It is this that he insinuates by the following words, which, without evading the question, reduces it once more to the subject from which he had been withdrawn: (*a*) "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

The following inference is deducible from these premises, viz.: that the slightest evil done to the most insignificant of those who follow Christ shall have its penalty and chastisement. What, therefore, shall their punishment be who, by scandal, shall have mortally wounded the soul of such an individual? A very trifling evil in the judgment of those who reckon souls as valueless; and it is perhaps for this reason that Jesus Christ seems to compare it to a glass of water; yet the greatest of evils in the eyes of the Saviour of souls, who, for this reason, launches against its author the terrible sentence which we find comprised in the following words: "And whosoever shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

Then, casting his eyes upon the world, contemplating the fearful ravages caused there by scandals, seeing iniquity communicate itself like the plague, overrunning all ages and all conditions, whilst men perish in thousands, and almost all by the hands of one another, grief, mingled with indignation, was stirred up within him at so deplorable a spectacle: and he cannot refrain from pronouncing that malediction, which has been to such a vast number of sages a signal,

(*a*) St. Mark, ix. 40, 41; St. Matthew, x. 42.

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them against us, by insulting a weakness which we see that Jesus Christ himself condescended to treat with delicate consideration.

as it were, to fly this tainted atmosphere, and to go seek in solitude, and even in the hollow of rocks, an asylum away from its corruption: (*a*) "Woe to the world because of scandal." For, although it is inevitable in human society, which is scarcely any thing else but a compound of corruption and weakness, still the general necessity coerces no one individual. Each taken separately can well avoid giving scandal; and "woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh."

Nevertheless, the crime of that man who giveth scandal in no way excuses him who takes it. The murderer shall be punished as a murderer; but his punishment shall not give back life to him from whom he hath taken it. Must we, then, of necessity perish? and is there no way for escaping the dangers that encompass us on every side? Yes, there are, though they are irksome, violent, and painful. Jesus Christ does not dissemble the fact. But, inasmuch as this is a question of life, and of the life of the soul, infinitely more precious than the life of the body, he imposes it upon us as a duty to make use of this bodily life, in the words which he had already spoken on the mountain, and which cannot be too deeply meditated upon: (*b*) "If thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off (6). It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the hell of unquenchable fire (7); where

(*a*) St. Matthew, xviii. 7. (*b*) St. Mark, ix. 42–49.

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(6) See the Sermon on the Mount, page 125, of this Part.

(7) Nature would earnestly wish that this expression was merely metaphorical, and that the fire of hell was not a real and material fire; but, with all the subtlety in our power, we never can put this construction upon it. For, let me be allowed to ask here, why should we find that in Scripture the punishment of hell is scarcely ever spoken of but as *fire?* Why (not to speak here of the Old Testament, wherein this term is so often employed), why, I say, do we see it repeated in the New Testament as often as thirty times? Why is it to be found in the enunciation of the sentence wherein usage, founded upon reason and good sense, admits nothing but simple and precise expressions? Could God wish that hell should never present itself to the mind but under the image of a fire which did not exist? Hath he not foreseen that from thence should originate, in all men, the idea, or rather the persuasion, of a real and material fire; that this persuasion, which thenceforth would be only an erroneous opinion, should be as widely diffused as religion itself; for where is it not to be found? and as durable; for in what period has it not been believed? Could he have wished to lay this inevitable snare for the credulity of

their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. If thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting, than having two feet to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not (8), and the fire is not extinguished. If thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee with one eye to enter into the kingdom of God, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. For every one shall be salted with fire," which shall preserve while it burns them. Victims of divine vengeance, they shall be used like all those of whom it is said: *Every victim shall be seasoned with salt* (9). Taking occasion from this to speak of true wisdom, of which salt is the symbol, he adds these words, as it were in passing: "Salt is a good thing; but if the salt become unsavory, wherewith will you season it? Have salt in you, and have peace among you." This last expression seems to refer to the contest which the apostles had had about pre-eminence. It teaches them that evangelical wisdom is the only means of maintaining peace amongst them, by curing them of the infatuation of pride and its jealous pretensions.

But the tenderness of his heart brings him back again to the little children, objects worthy the favor of an humbled and annihilated God, whether they be such by age, or have become so by their humble simplicity. He does not think that he has done enough for them

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all Christians—I say of all, without exception, because we see that the most enlightened have given in to this belief, as well as the most simple; and what nature would struggle to make pass as a popular prejudice has been constantly believed, taught—I say even dreaded, and with the liveliest apprehension, by the first men of Christianity.

(8) By the worm, remorse of conscience is usually understood. Several, nevertheless, also understand it to mean material worms preying upon the reprobate, whose flesh they devour, whilst that flesh is ever renewed. Saint Augustine, who admits the first explanation, is very far from rejecting the second. What gives greater probability to the latter is these words of Judith, chapter xvi.: *I shall send fire and worms into their flesh, in order that they may burn, and that they may eternally suffer.* It is evident that allusion is here made to hell, since the sacred text speaks of eternal suffering. Now, it seems that it would be more natural to express remorse by *worm*, in the singular number, than by *worms*, in the plural. But, supposing the expression were correct, these worms, if they signify remorse, should be lodged in the heart, and not in the flesh.

(9) In the 2d chapter of Leviticus, verse 13, we read these words: *Whatsoever sacrifice thou offerest, thou shalt season it with salt.*

in frightening their tempters by the terrible image of the immortal worm and the eternal fire; he wishes that they should be fostered with as much respect as fear, and likewise with the love which is due to those whom he himself has loved so tenderly. They are confided to the care of angels: who is there that respects not such powerful protectors? He has descended from heaven to save them, by incredible toils and sufferings: who is there that will not shrink with horror from procuring the loss of those who have cost him so much? (*a*) "See [*he said to them*] that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you that their angels (10) in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven (11). For," continues he, and this is the second reason, and a more affecting one than the first; "for the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."

They were lost in reality, and must become the prey of the infernal wolf. But "what think you: If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray, doth he not leave the ninety-nine

(*a*) St. Matthew, xviii. 10–14.

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(10) Their guardian angels; for the words have been so understood at all times, and this text alone would suffice to prove it. We learn from Scripture, 1st. That kingdoms and empires have each their tutelar angel; 2d. That each particular church hath also its own; 3d. That each of the faithful hath an angel, who watches over him from his birth until his death. The manner in which Jesus Christ speaks in this passage seems to suppose that the Jews were not ignorant of it, and they still believe it at the present day. When the damsel to whom Peter spoke on his coming out of prison had said *that Peter stood before the gate, they* who were in the house *say to her: Thou art mad; but she affirmed that it was so. Then said they: It is his* ANGEL. The Calvinists acknowledge that the angels are charged with the administration of the world; but they do not wish to believe that each angel hath his department: their incredulity arises from an apprehension lest they should chance to believe the same truth as the Catholic Church. The latter has settled, as regards this point, the belief of her true children, by instituting the feast of the holy *guardian* angels.

Although it be not a matter of equal certainty that all men, without excepting the heathens, have each their guardian angel, still it is the most common and the most authorized sentiment. It has been also thought that each man has his demon, who tempts him, and that Saint Paul speaks of his, when he said that the angel of Satan had been given to him in order to buffet him. This opinion has been followed by the majority of the ancients, although it does not appear to have sufficient foundation in Scripture, which, however, contains nothing contradictory to it.

(11) In whatever place they may be, they always retain the intuitive vision of God, in which the essence of beatitude consists: they carry their paradise everywhere about them, in the same way as the devils carry their hell.

in the mountains, and goeth to seek that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he find it, Amen, I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that than for the ninety-nine that went not astray (12). [*This pastor is the image of the great pastor of all, and*] Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FRATERNAL CORRECTION.—POWER OF BINDING AND LOOSING.—WE ARE TO PARDON SEVENTY-SEVEN TIMES.—PARABLE OF THE WICKED SERVANT.—SECRET JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, FOR THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.—THE TEN LEPERS.

After having commenced by humility, the Saviour had imperceptibly proceeded to speak of charity. This subject was too dear to his heart to be lightly changed for another. Having treated, therefore, of the charity which we should exercise towards those whom we are most inclined to despise, viz., the weak and lowly, he gives rules for what we are to do with regard to those whom we are chiefly tempted to hate, viz., those from whom we have received any offence. If thy brother, said he (he gives him this name, so well calculated to disarm hatred and to awaken tenderness)—(*a*) "If thy brother sin against thee, reprove him (1); [*this solace is granted to*

(*a*) St. Luke, xvii. 3, 4.

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(12) This sheep is not dearer to him than the others, since he is disposed to do for the others, if they happened to stray, the same that he did for this one; but this causes him, at the moment, a sensible joy, which the others do not impart to him, viz., the joy of having found it.

(1) An explanation is often sufficient to unite two divided hearts; sometimes it might have only the effect of making the breach still wider. There are some resentments which give way of their own accord; there are others which require applications to the wounds. Some minds easily forget injuries—the best course is not to recall them to their recollection; there are other persons in whose hearts the shaft remains until they are soothed—it is desirable to furnish them with an occasion for this alleviation, by speaking to them. We are always wrong when we only meet parties in order to taunt them with

your weakness; but] if he do penance, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day be converted unto thee, saying: I repent, forgive him. [I have said to you]: Go, go, and rebuke him;" but remark with what caution you must proceed here. In the first place, the matter must be negotiated "between thee and him alone." Seeing you so careful to avoid injuring his reputation, perhaps he will hear thee; and (*a*) "if he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother (2). If he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand (3). If he will not hear them, tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church (4), let him be to thee as the heathen (5) and the Publican (6)." He shall become

(*a*) St. Matthew, xviii. 15–35.

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bitter reproaches; or when, whilst we cease our intercourse, we do not cease making the world ring with slanderous complaints and defamatory insinuations. We always act right, in the sight of God, when we only act from the motive of charity, and with a sincere desire of peace.

(2) You shall have gained him to God and to yourself. To you, by reconciling him with yourself; and to God, by leading him mildly to the point of making you the reparation which God prescribes to him in your regard, and which God makes an indispensable duty to him. See what has been said of the necessity of reparation, Part I., chapter xvi., page 123 of this volume.

(3) In order to represent to him the injustice of his proceedings, and the justice of the reparation which is demanded from him. He might very probably decline allowing you to be the judge in your own cause; but he cannot reasonably mistrust those who must be presumed to have no other interest in the affair than that of equity and reason. The witnesses may also be otherwise useful. If he does not yield to their remonstrances, they will certify to the Church that you have not proceeded so far as the denunciation, until after all the means of meekness and charity have been vainly employed.

(4) That is to say, the Republic, said the heretic Castalion. This explanation is absurd. These first Protestants neither relished Church nor Monarchy. If we were to credit them, the entire universe, as well sacred as profane, should be governed by civil magistrates. Tell it to the Church, that is to say, to the head and the ancients of each church, who are the bishop and the priests. This is the way in which the rule was practised in the primitive ages. Saint Paul imposes it as a duty upon all Christians, and to deviate therefrom was reckoned a grievous irregularity. The cause of this regulation no longer exists; it was that in those days all the secular judges were heathens.

(5) These words do not authorize us to hate him; they only signify that, after the judgment of the Church, we should deal with him as with an excommunicated person.

(6) That is to say, treat him as you, who are Jews, treat Publicans, and not as Publicans deserve to be treated. The Jews exclude them from their religious assemblies, just as they exclude Pagans. The exclusion of the latter was just; but that of the Publicans

such, in point of fact, when the Church shall have cut off from her bosom this incorrigible sinner; I say he shall become such in the eyes of God and his angels. For, "Amen, I say to you [and in your person I say it to all those who shall succeed to your ministry]: Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

But, in order that you may better understand how agreeable to God is the union of hearts, and the power which it has over his heart, "Again I say to you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth concerning any thing whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by my Father who is in heaven (7); for where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," praying with them and for them.

The Saviour had previously said that if our brother sin against us seven times in the day, we must pardon him just as often. This number *seven* might require explanation; for if it usually signifies the precise number which it expresses, it is likewise employed sometimes to signify an indeterminate number. Jesus Christ has not specified in which of these two meanings he used the word. "Peter [who desired to be enlightened on this point] then came unto Jesus, and said: How often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" This mode of interrogation shows clearly that he thought the acts of forgiveness should fall short of, rather than exceed, that number. He must have been highly surprised when Jesus saith to him: "I say not to thee seven times, but till seventy times seven times;" which undoubtedly signifies that we must pardon injuries without end, and as often as we have been offended. Therefore, added he, to make them feel how justly God requires this

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was not. Their profession, which was necessary for the State, was not condemned by religion. John the Baptist does not oblige them to renounce it; he is satisfied with saying to them: *Do nothing more than that which is appointed you.*—(St. Luke, iii. 13.)

(7) When prayer has the qualities which it ought to have, it is of faith that God listens to it. He either confers what is petitioned for, or he confers some favor more desirable. This something more desirable is sometimes the contrary of what we petition for: *You know not what you ask.*—(St. Matthew, xx. 22.) But God well knows what is necessary for you. Ever pray, and leave him to act.

pardon from us, and with what injustice and inhumanity we refuse it—"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened to a king who would take an account of his servants (8). And when he had begun to take the account, one was brought to him that owed him ten thousand talents. As he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. That servant, falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant, being moved with pity, let him go and forgave him the debt. But when that servant was gone out, he found one of his fellow-servants, that owed him an hundred pence; and laying hold of him, he throttled him, saying: Pay what thou owest. His fellow-servant, falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. He would not, but went and cast him into prison till he paid his debt. Now his fellow-servants, seeing what was done, were very much grieved, and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him, and said to him: Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me; shouldst not thou, then, have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had compassion on thee? And his lord, being angry, delivered him to the torturers (9), until he paid all the debt. So also shall my heavenly Father do to you if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."

(*a*) "Now the Jews' feast (10) of tabernacles was at hand. The

(*a*) St. John, vii. 2–11, 25, 26.

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(8) The reference, properly speaking, is neither to the Church nor to Heaven. By the kingdom of heaven is understood the conduct which God pursues in the administration of the world; it is as if the proposition were: Behold in what manner God, who is the king of the universe, conducts himself with regard to men, who are his creatures and his subjects.

(9) Creditors at that period were not satisfied with thrusting their debtors into prison; they made them there endure buffets and tortures until they satisfied their creditors—a cruel policy, which the meekness of the Gospel seems to have abolished everywhere.

(10) It was one of the principal feasts of the Jews. It had been instituted in remembrance of the tents under which the Israelites had encamped in the desert during forty years. It lasted eight days, and commenced the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish year. The Jews at the present day record the memory thereof on the 15th of September, raising in an open space a hut embellished and covered with foliage.

brethren of Jesus said to him: Pass from hence and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works which thou dost; for there is no man that doth any thing secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, manifest thyself to the world."

It is not surprising that the relatives of Jesus should desire him to show himself in the capital. The glory which he might there acquire must have reflected back on them. It was natural that they should not be insensible to this at a time when we see that the apostles themselves were not altogether exempt from ambition. But that which does appear surprising is, that they should have had the boldness to reproach the Saviour with the alleged inconsistency of his conduct, and the presumption to think that he could be in want of their advice. The evangelist explains the reason of this. "For neither did his brethren believe in him:" not that they did not believe him to have the power of working miracles—what they have just said evidently supposes that they had this faith; but they doubted, at least, whether he was the Messiah, and that the Messiah should be the only Son of the living God—God himself, the uncreated and incarnate wisdom. He who did not usurp equality with the Most High, but who possesses it in right of his eternal generation, did not disdain to give them a reason for his conduct; and instead of reproaching them with their indiscreet temerity, "He said to them [*with his usual moderation*]: My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world [*with whom you have no cause of quarrel*] cannot hate you. But me it hateth: because I give testimony of it that the works thereof are evil;" and its hatred obliges me to take precautions which are not necessary for those who have nothing to fear. "Go [*therefore*] you up to this festival day. But I go not up to this festival day (11), because my time is

(11) We have, in the Greek: *I do not go, as yet;* which removes all difficulty in reconciling the conduct of Jesus Christ with his words. Among the old Greek manuscripts, some have: *I do not go there, as yet;* in the others, we read simply, as in the Vulgate: *I go not up.* The Fathers and the ancient interpreters have read the text, some in one way, some in another. What follows these expressions seemed to me sufficient to fix the sense of *I do not go,* to that of *I do not go as yet,* as shall be seen in the continuation of our text.

not accomplished." It was not long before *it was* accomplished, for the delay alluded to here was only of very few days' duration; "and after his brethren were gone up, Jesus also went up to the feast, not openly, but, as it were, in secret."

Throughout all this there is neither that levity of conduct nor want of sincerity in words, wherewith the enemies of Christianity in early times have reproached him. If he says that he will not go up to the festival, he immediately adds that the reason is because his time is not yet come; which implies that when his time shall be come he can go there, and that in going there he shall neither act against his word nor against his first resolution. It appears certain that his enemies had formed a plot to make an attempt on his life during this festival, calculating to a certainty that he would be present. We shall shortly read that "the Jews sought him on the festival day;" and we shall see the surprise of those who, aware of the plot without participating therein, said: "Is not this he whom they seek to kill? Behold, he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to him." But should not the cause which hindered him from being found there on the first days, hinder him also from showing himself there on the following days? Yes, had he been an ordinary man, because then he would not have known what day the plot was to be put in execution; and this ignorance would have obliged him to keep from Jerusalem, or at least to remain concealed there during the entire festival. But, as he was ignorant of nothing, he knew that the plot must have succeeded, if at all, during the first days, and that after the lapse of some days it must fail. This statement alone would suffice to explain all, if it were not that a further question may be started, viz., Was it not easy for the Saviour to render useless, by a miracle, all the efforts of his enemies? Who can doubt it? But he did not wish to employ miracles until human means were insufficient. To act otherwise is tempting God, as he himself said to Satan. True, he was incapable of this, not only because he was impeccable, but also because it cannot be said that God could be tempted by him who, being God himself, has all nature at his supreme disposal. But he wished to instruct his disciples, and to teach them, by his example, that it is only when all natural means fail, that rational confidence can rely on miracles.

(*a*) "Jesus [*therefore*] would not walk [*publicly*] in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him." Not so in the province where he usually resided. Although there he had to encounter opposition, yet hatred and fury did not go to the extent of wishing to attempt his life. Wherefore, reserving precautions for the moment when he should enter Judea, in (*b*) "going to Jerusalem, he passed [*publicly*] through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. As he entered into a certain town, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off," to obey the law, which interdicted them from all commerce with men. Obliged to raise their voice, so as to make themselves heard, "they lifted up their voice, saying: Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. Whom when [*this good Master*] saw, Go, said he, show yourselves to the priests." This implied a promise that they should be cured before they arrived there, since this ceremony was merely the judicial verification of their cure. They believed him, and set off at once. Their faith, joined with this prompt obedience, soon produced its effect. "As they went they were made clean. One of them, when he saw that he was made clean, went back, with a loud voice glorifying God (12); and he fell on his face before Jesus' feet, giv-

(*a*) St. John, vii. 1. (*b*) St. Luke, xvii. 11–19.

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(12) Leprosy is the figure of sin; and what passes here is the natural image of penance, which is the remedy of sin. The man infected with this spiritual leprosy keeps himself, out of respect, at a distance from Jesus Christ. His humility does not in anywise lessen his confidence. From the bottom of his heart he cries aloud to the supreme physician, which obliges the God of mercy to cast upon him a glance of compassion. Jesus Christ, who can cure him in an instant, and by himself alone, sends him to the priests, whose rights he wishes to be recognized, and their ministry honored. The dispositions are sometimes so perfect, that the sinner is justified before he presents himself before the minister. Still he must observe the law; but he must be exceedingly cautious not to forget his benefactor, and the sinner, when truly and profoundly contrite, doth not forget him. The more bitter the grief he has felt for his sin, the more lively is his gratitude for the grace he has received. He cannot be silent on the mercies of the Lord; he publishes them aloud; he recounts them to the universe. *Come*, saith he with the prophet, *come and see the great things which the Lord hath done to my soul.* He then ventures to approach the Saviour, and thereupon he only becomes the more humble. He casts himself at his feet, the ordinary asylum of all true penitents—the asylum of Magdalen, whom we always find there after her conversion. Let those who imitate her tell us the sweets which he makes them relish when embracing his sacred feet; let them tell us whether all the joys of the world are worth one of the tears with which they water those sacred

ing thanks. This was a Samaritan. Then Jesus, answering, said: Were not ten made clean? And where are the nine? There is no one found to return and give glory to God but this stranger. Afterwards he said to him: Arise, go thy way; for thy faith hath made thee whole." This should be understood to mean the salvation of the soul; for the faith of the others had procured for them also the cure of the body. But the faith of this latter being more lively, more durable, and, above all, more grateful, merited for him this second favor, infinitely more precious than the first, which is little more than the shade and figure thereof.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JESUS SHOWS HIMSELF AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.—HE PREACHES IN THE TEMPLE.—DIVERS JUDGMENTS CONCERNING HIM.—ARCHERS SENT TO APPREHEND HIM.

In the mean time, Jesus continued his journey, and arrived at Jerusalem. But whether it be that he was not to be found at the commencement of the solemnity of the tabernacles, or perhaps that at the outset he kept himself concealed there, which was not difficult amongst so prodigious a multitude; (*a*) "the Jews [*of Jerusalem, who expected to see him there*] sought him on the festival-day, and said: Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the multitude concerning him; for some said, He is a good man; others said, No, but he seduceth the people (1). Yet no man [*of those who*

(*a*) St. John, vii. 11–30.

(1) It is thus, remarks Saint Augustine, that we speak every day of his servants. If any one appear gifted with some extraordinary grace, or if he make considerable progress in virtue, some say he is a worthy man; others allege that he is a deceiver. But, adds this Father, those who praise him, do so in a subdued tone; and those who blame him vociferate aloud. There are several reasons for this difference. Firstly, esteem and affection make, naturally, less noise than hatred; and criticism is always more boisterous than approbation. Moreover, when the wicked rise up against those to whom men of

had espoused his side] spoke openly of him, for fear of the Jews. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught." Wisdom and science flowed like a mighty stream from his divine lips. The admiration with which he was heard suspended for a time all other sentiments. "The Jews wondered, saying: How doth this man know letters, having never learned?" Jesus explains this mystery, by informing them from whom this knowledge came which surprised them so highly. "My doctrine," he answered them, "is not mine, but his that sent me," that is to say, it is from God. The Jews believed not, because they did not see; and they saw not, because they did not wish to be enlightened. Their incredulity was the natural effect of their blindness, and it in turn proceeded from the evil dispositions of their hearts. That saying of the Psalmist, which we every day see accomplished before our eyes, was then verified in them: *He would not understand, that he might do well.*—(Psalm 35.) "For," adds the Saviour, "if any man will do the will of him, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

He has just discovered to them the source of their incredulity. What follows gives them, if not an infallible proof, at least a reasonable presumption, of the truth of his doctrine, and of the divinity of his mission: "He [*saith he*] that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true, and there is no injustice in him." Jesus Christ cannot, therefore, be suspected of fraud and of lying, which are here expressed by the term *injustice*, because it is evident to any one who pays attention to the fact, that, in all his words and in all his ac-

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worth are attached, they know that there is nothing to apprehend from the latter: whereas good men, on the contrary, have every thing to apprehend from the wicked, if they venture at all to declare in favor of those whom the wicked persecute. We may also add, that good men are silent from delicacy towards the just man who is persecuted. The hatred entertained towards the just is irritated by contradiction; and the greater number of partisans in favor of the just, the more rampant is the fury of the wicked against them. Hatred, therefore, alone speaks out: at all events, it alone makes itself heard. This should be carefully noticed; for those who merely listen, imagine that the hatred is universal, because they hear nothing but the yell of hatred: they are deceived. The people of worth, who love the virtuous, and who honor them even to veneration, but who do not make themselves heard, are sometimes a hundred to one.

tions, he has only in view the glory of God, whom lying offends, and whom truth alone honors. Still, it is not absolutely impossible that a good man, who has only in view the glory of God, should state things contrary to truth. Here is the reason why we have said that this was here rather a reasonable presumption, than an infallible proof of the truth of his doctrine. A man of this character may then deceive himself, without wishing or intending to do so: it is error in him, and neither fraud nor lying. The thing is easily recognized, if he happen to be reproved for it. He submits immediately, and subscribes without resistance to the judgment which condemns him: whereas, he that seeketh his own glory, cannot bear a like humiliation; he bristles up, he is transported with passion, he judges his judges, and condemns his pastors.

It would be useless to add, that this is inapplicable to the Man-God. Incapable of lying, neither is he susceptible of error. If the thing be evident to any one who recognizes his divinity, even those who do not as yet acknowledge it, can in no way doubt it in view of his miracles, which were the seal with which God confirmed the truth of all his words. But as he then proposed to convince the Jews rather by reason than by prodigies, he proceeds to show them, by their own conduct, that what they regarded in him as a capital crime, was a lesser infraction of the law than what they permitted to themselves without scruple. For the question at issue still was, the violation of the Sabbath; and if envy was the true cause of the plots formed against the Saviour's life, the cure of a paralytic, wrought miraculously on the Sabbath-day, was the pretext on which they acted. Eighteen months had rolled away since this event, which had been fully justified at the time when it occurred. But they had forgotten the justification, and still remembered the pretended crime. Here, then, is what Jesus Christ again said to them on this subject: "Did not Moses give you the law? And yet none of you keepeth the law [*if it be true, as you say, that I have broken it*]. Why seek you to kill me? The multitude answered and said: Thou hast a devil: who seeketh to kill thee?" We perceive in these wrathful words the hatred which had conceived the crime, now wrought up to a furious height on hearing this just reproach. "Jesus," *without evincing any emotion, continued his dis-*

course, and "said to them: One work I have done, and you all wonder. Yet Moses gave you circumcision (not because it [*originally*] is of Moses, but of the Fathers), and on the Sabbath-day you circumcise a man," when it happens to be the eighth day after his birth. "If a man receive circumcision on a Sabbath-day, that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I have healed the whole man on the Sabbath-day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment."

This last expression reminded the Jews of another law of Moses which they were actually infringing, viz., that of Deuteronomy, which admonishes them, almost in the same terms, to judge according to the very equity of the thing, without regard to persons. Now, on this occasion, they judged the action of Jesus Christ not according to what it was, but by its author, whose person was odious to them. Hence they pronounced as criminal, that which in reality was a lesser infraction of the Sabbath than circumcision. For the law of nature, which obliges us to succor the unfortunate, should take precedence of the law of circumcision, which is merely a positive injunction. To wound a man, supposing there be a law that commands the act, is always a lesser good than to cure another man; and if we wish to carry out the comparison of the two actions, circumcision being a manual operation which entails the necessity of dressing the wound, is a much more servile work than the simple word used by Jesus Christ in restoring health to the paralytic. However, those who were aware of the conspiracy which the principal men of the nation had formed against the Saviour, were highly surprised to hear him speak so publicly and so fearlessly. "Some, therefore, of Jerusalem said: Is not this he whom they seek to kill? Behold, he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ? But [*added they*] we know this man whence he is; but when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is."

We know not how they had conceived this idea, that when the Christ should come, his origin was to be entirely unknown; and it is conjectured, with sufficient probability, that the error arose from this text of Isaias: *Who shall declare his generation?* The prophet understood this of his eternal generation, not as of a thing to remain

concealed, but as alluding to an ineffable mystery. These persons, who were, undoubtedly, the most ignorant of the people—for we shall soon hear others speak who were better informed—these persons, I say, explained the text as referring to the temporal birth, and seemed to believe that the Messiah was to appear suddenly, without it being known whence he came, or who were his parents. Jesus was aware of their discourse, whether he was or was not within reach of hearing. "He, therefore, cried out in the temple, teaching and saying: You both know me and you know whence I am. I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you know not." You do not, therefore, know in fact whence I am; and this character of the Messias, if indeed it be one, you cannot deny that I have. "I know him, because I am from him (2), and he hath sent me."

The first of these latter words alludes to the eternal generation of the Son of God, and the second to his birth in the course of time. The Jews must then have understood the sense of the words, since it is said, that in consequence of what he had been saying, "they sought to apprehend him;" and we have elsewhere seen that one of the principal reasons for which they sought to put him to death is, because he said God was his father, making himself equal to God. (*a*) "But no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. [*In the mean time*] of the people many believed in him and said: When the Christ cometh, shall he do more miracles than these which this man doth (3)?"

(*a*) St. John, v. 18; vii. 18–36.

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(2) Literally, I *am* from him. This is not a French expression; hence the majority of [*French*] interpreters have translated, I *come* from him. This translation does not seem sufficient to render the full force of the *ab ipso sum*, which properly signifies, I draw my existence from him. N.B.—Our author thinks he comes nearest to the sense by translating thus: Je procède de lui.—P. De Ligny's French translation is considered the most faithful and exact Scriptural version in the French language. See introduction to edition of 1843, *Libraire Catholique de Perisse, Frères.*

(3) He performs an infinite number of miracles, in order to prove that he is the Christ; he is, therefore, such in point of fact. Common sense led them directly to this consequence. Others were drawn aside by sophistry, and rejected this plain truth. Good sense and subtlety are two very different things, and often widely opposed to each other.

Those who were friendly towards the Saviour did not venture, as we have said, to testify it openly; but nothing escapes passion. "The Pharisees heard [*that portion of*] the people murmuring these things concerning him." They grew apprehensive of the consequences, and began to fear, lest what they termed seduction might in a short time captivate the minds of all. To check its course "the rulers and Pharisees sent ministers to apprehend Jesus." We cannot say whether Jesus was yet there when the latter arrived, or if it was to them, or to the people who were still listening, that he addressed the following words, apparently that they might be repeated: "He therefore said to them: Yet a little while I am with you, and then I go to him that sent me: you shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am (4), thither you cannot come." Thus he declared to them the futility of the projects which they formed against his person, until the moment when he should permit them to do what he had resolved upon enduring. That moment was not far distant; but it was to be followed immediately by his ascension, and his entrance into heaven, whither they could not follow him, because they should have closed it forever against themselves. From that heavenly abode he was to survey them occupied with useless care, and despairing ever to find among the false Messiahs the true one whom they should have already disowned. Those who believed in him were afterwards given to understand these mysteries. But whilst the first words he uttered were then understood, the latter were still a mystery. "The Jews therefore said among themselves: Whither will he go that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and

(4) In the text we find the present tense *where I am, ubi ego sum.* Among the interpreters, some translate *where I am to go, où je dois aller;* others, *where I shall be, où je serai,* in the future, because, in point of fact, Jesus Christ speaks of a time to come. We have adhered to the present, because it comprises a truth which disappears when the future is substituted. In reality Jesus Christ was already there, where he was to go; that is to say, in heaven, where he was always present by his immensity. The present had, therefore, with respect to him, its proper signification, which it would not have had if Jesus Christ were purely man. We know that Saint John, when writing his Gospel, chiefly sought to manifest the divinity of the Saviour. Every thing which refers to this should be presumed to have been written with this design, which should be ever borne in mind.



THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

teach the Gentiles? What is this saying that he hath said: You shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am you cannot come?"

CHAPTER XXXV.

MYSTIC WATER.—EFFUSION OF THE HOLY GHOST.—THE JEWS DIVIDED AMONGST THEMSELVES.—COUNCIL OF THE PRIESTS.—OPPOSITION OF NICODEMUS.—THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

A RELIGIOUS ceremony which the Jews practised during the feast of tabernacles may have given occasion for the last words which the Saviour addressed to them during this solemnity. They went to draw water from the fountain of Siloe, and then poured it upon the altar, beseeching God to bless them with an abundance of the fruits of the earth. There is every appearance that, on the subject of this water, he spoke to them, as to the Samaritan, of a more wondrous and more desirable water. It was the last and greatest day of the festivity. (*a*) "Jesus stood, and cried, saying: If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He that believeth in me (*this explains the word 'drink'*), as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This he said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in him; for as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (1)."

"Of that multitude, therefore, when they had heard these words of his, some said: This is the prophet indeed. Others said: This is

(*a*) St. John, vii. 37–53.

(1) The Holy Ghost had been given to the holy sage, Simon, to Zachary, to John the Baptist, and to some others; but they were few in number. It was not until after the Lord Jesus had been fully glorified—that is to say, after his ascension, and upon Pentecost-day—that the Holy Ghost was given to all the disciples, and in such plenitude as served to diffuse the Spirit over all the earth. This diffusion, proceeding from this plenitude, is signified by the preceding words: *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

the Christ. But some said: Doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Doth not the Scripture say that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the town where David was? So there arose a dissension among the people, because of him; and some of them would have apprehended him. But no man laid hands upon him."

These were the priests' ministers or officers, who were in hopes of executing on that day what they were unable to accomplish on the preceding days. His divine eloquence was the charm which tied up their hands. "They came, therefore, to the chief priests and the Pharisees. And they said to them: Why have you not brought him? The ministers answered: Never did man speak like this man. The Pharisees answered them: Are you also seduced? Hath any one of the rulers believed in him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed [*of God*]. Nicodemus, he that came to Jesus by night, who was one of them, said to them: Doth our law judge any man unless it first hear him, and know what he doth?" It was easy for them to answer: When we have him in our power we shall interrogate him, and we shall hear what he has to say. There is, therefore, every reason to believe that their design was to put the Saviour to death without any form of trial, because, instead of making this answer, which would have silenced Nicodemus, they were reduced to answer him with offensive language: "Art thou also a Galilean (2)? they answered to him. Search the Scriptures, and see that out of Galilee a prophet riseth not. And every man returned to his own house (3)"

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(2) They all start from this principle—*He is a Galilean.* The Jews—properly speaking, that is to say, those of the province of Judea, and principally those of Jerusalem—regarded the Galileans with contempt. This is the reason why the enemies of the Saviour affectedly pointed him out by this name. They were persuaded, and with some justice, that a disreputable name is the shortest and surest means of lowering in popular estimation even the most respectable persons. Subsequently the Jews continued to designate Jesus Christ by this name, and it was from them that Julian the Apostate borrowed it. Perhaps this same Julian had the most disordered brain which was ever encircled with a diadem, no matter what his panegyrists may say, who could never have been led to eulogize such a man unless their own intellects had also been unsettled.

(3) A good man parleying in counsel with the wicked will never reclaim them back to reason and equity: but by representing reason and equity to them in so clear a light that they cannot elude the evidence thereof, he disconcerts their projects, and, at all events,

True it is we do not find in Scripture that a prophet ever came forth from Galilee; but much less do we find it said that there never should be one from thence. What, then, should hinder God from raising up one in that country as in others? Thus, without cavilling about country, the only thing to be done was to examine whether this was or was not a prophet. Yet this reason—so bad, that a man's contenting himself with it was tantamount to an avowal that he rejected Jesus Christ without any reason—this reason, I say, was more than sufficient for hearts transported with passion; and in this regard no difference can be drawn between the enlightened and the unenlightened mind. Those who alleged this reason were, without contradiction, the most polished and the most learned class amongst the Jews. Nevertheless, of all those who refused to acknowledge the Saviour, they are those who give the most absurd reason for their refusal—one, in fact, that a child could refute. For that ignorant populace, who maintained that it was not known whence the Messias should come, appeared to think so, on the faith of sundry texts of Scripture, which seemed, at first sight, to present this meaning to the mind. Those who said that he should spring from the race of David, and be born at Bethlehem, said the truth; and they only erred in thinking that the second of these two marks did not belong to Jesus Christ: an error against which they could only secure themselves by a minute research into the entire life of the Saviour, who, being removed from Bethlehem to Egypt immediately after his birth, and brought thence into Galilee, where he dwelt after his return from Egypt until the commencement of his mission, gave ground for thinking that he was a native of that province. They deceived themselves, therefore; and what rendered their error inexcusable before God is, that the miracles of Jesus Christ obliged them to subscribe to the truth of all he advanced concerning himself, and forced them to seek in him the characters of the Messias, which they did not at once perceive, but which were easily ascer-

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suspends the execution thereof. Injustice is disarmed when stripped of all color of justice. A good man cannot always succeed in securing this result; but whenever he can, he ought to do so; and the apprehension, or even the certainty, of encountering their hatred, ought never to deter him from doing his duty.

tained if they had only set about examining the subject. But, after all, their error was not without some appearance of reason, whereas that of the Pharisees had not the slightest excuse; for to reject Jesus Christ, merely because no prophets had heretofore appeared in Galilee, was tantamount, as we have already said, to maintaining that God could not, or never would, raise one from that country. The first position is notoriously false: how did they know the second? This would establish, by consequence, that they should reject as false prophets all those who were the first prophets of their country. What could be more absurd! Yet this is the groundwork on which the masters and doctors in Israel found their opposition: which shows, as we have already stated, that even by the most enlightened persons, when, unhappily, they have allowed themselves to be biased, the most palpable blunders are converted into demonstration; for the reproach of ignorance wherewith they taunt Nicodemus only springs from the fact that he cannot feel as they do the force of this reasoning: There never was a prophet of Galilee; therefore there never shall be such.

(*a*) "In the mean time [*as it grew late*], Jesus went unto Mount Olivet," so called on account of an olive plantation, with which it was covered. It lies beyond the torrent of Kedron, east of Jerusalem, and as far distant from that city as a man was allowed to travel on the Sabbath-day, that is to say, two Italian miles. When Jesus sojourned at Jerusalem, he was accustomed to pass the night there in prayer, and the traitor Judas knew this but too well. Adjacent to this lay Bethania, where Mary and Martha resided, with their brother Lazarus. We know how dear this family was to the Saviour, and their vicinity may, indeed, have been one of the reasons for the preference which he had given to this place. After having passed the night there, according to his custom, "early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came to him. Sitting down, he taught them," when he was interrupted by a new machination, which his enemies set in motion against him, but which he easily turned against themselves.

"The Scribes and the Pharisees bring unto him a woman taken in

(*a*) St. John, viii. 1–11.

adultery (4), and they set her in the midst [*of the assembly*]. Master, they said to Jesus, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might accuse him" either of prevarication, if he undertook to moderate the rigor of the law, or of contradicting himself, if he was of opinion that they should enforce the extreme rigor of the law—he who hitherto had always evinced the greatest indulgence and compassion for sinners. Jesus, who knew their designs, and who did not wish to answer them, did at first what is customary whenever any one wishes to elude an importunate or captious question: it is usual on such an occasion to seem inattentive, as if the mind were occupied by some other thought. It was, therefore, with this intention, "bowing himself down, he wrote with his finger on the ground (5)." His ene-

(4) This narrative is not found in most of the Greek manuscripts; yet it is found in some of very great antiquity, and in almost all the ancient Latin manuscripts. If we were merely to consult the rules of criticism, it would be questionable enough whether or not the passage is truly part of the Scripture. Calvin thinks he recognizes here the Spirit of God—which Beza denies. It is optional with their disciples to credit which of the two they like best. Not so with the Catholics. The Church hath fixed their belief upon this point by the decree of the Council of Trent, which makes it obligatory to receive as books of Scripture all those that the Council enumerates, and to receive them in all their parts, just as they are found in the ancient Vulgate. Now the Gospel of Saint John is one of these books; and in the Vulgate the narrative referring to the adulteress constitutes part of the Gospel of Saint John. We, therefore, know what we are to believe, because we know whom we are to believe.

(5) We do not know what he wrote. We scarcely know whether he formed characters, or whether he merely traced lines, although the first conjecture is most probable, because it is said that *he wrote*. Nevertheless, some have asserted not only that he did write, but even what he wrote. A great many individuals assure us that he wrote the secret sins of the accusers of the adulteress. Where have they learned this? They add, that it was this disclosure which obliged these sinners when thus unmasked to fly off one after the other. This does not appear to have been the case; for the evangelist doth not say that they withdrew after having *seen* what Jesus wrote, but after having heard what he *said*. Other interpreters think that the Saviour confined himself to the writing of some short, energetic sentence, calculated to confound these rash accusers—for instance, these words of Jeremias, xxii., 29, 30: *O, earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord: Write this man barren.* Or else these words, which he had already pronounced upon another occasion (Matthew, vii. 5): *Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.* One thing alone is certain, viz., that we are ignorant of what he wrote.

mies either did not comprehend him, or wished to force from him the answer which should furnish matter for their calumny, whilst his goodness was seeking to spare them the confusion which he knew would result to them. As they persisted, "when, therefore, they continued asking him, he lifted up his head, and said to them: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again stooping down, he wrote on the ground." The stroke told, and this expression, together with the light by which he discovered to these false zealots all the crimes of their impure conscience, produced its effect upon the spot. "They, hearing this, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest [*as more shrewd or perhaps more criminal*], so that Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus, lifting up himself, said to her: Where are they that accuse thee? Hath no man condemned thee? Who said: No man, Lord. Jesus said: Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more." Thus, by the virtue of one single word, we see all at once mercy exercised and the law respected—the sinful woman rescued and her liberator justified—hypocrisy unmasked and malice confounded—Jesus victorious, and his enemies put to flight.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ANOTHER DISCOURSE OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE JEWS.—HE GIVES TESTIMONY OF HIMSELF.—DEATH IN SIN.—SLAVERY OF SIN.—WE ARE EMANCIPATED FROM IT BY THE SON ALONE.

HAVING at last got rid of this importunate group, (*a*) "Jesus again spoke to the people, saying: I am the light of the world. He that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life (1)."

(*a*) St. John, viii. 12–15.

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(1) Thus denominated, because it conducts to the life of glory, or rather because even from the present time it confers life and grace. Both constructions are true, and it may be understood in both senses, neither of which excludes the other.

It is conceded on all sides that such magnificent statements should not be advanced without proofs; and it must also be conceded that whatever proved, in a general way, the divinity of our Saviour's mission, proved, at the same time, the truth of all his statements. But who ever required human proof of an extraordinary and divine mission? God himself must attest this, and if he doth not do so, the testimony of man is insufficient. By this mark had the Jews recognized all the prophets, commencing with Moses. God had stamped their mission with the seal of his omnipotence: this was quite enough, and the Jews had never entertained the notion of asking from them any thing further. And, in point of fact, we cannot but feel how absurd it would have been to have asked Moses, after the division of the waters of the Red Sea, to prove the divinity of his mission. Jesus Christ, after so many miracles, was at least in the same position. Nevertheless, his enemies were not ashamed to confront him with this pitiful objection. "The Pharisees therefore said to him: Thou givest testimony of thyself; thy testimony is not true. Jesus answered and said to them: Although I give testimony of myself, my testimony is true; for I know whence I come and whither I go. But you, you know not whence I come, or whither I go."

He came from heaven, and thither he was to return; this is what he, at least, insinuates by these words. But he gives them to understand, at the same time, that his testimony can only come from heaven; that we must not, therefore, pause to seek witnesses for it on earth, because those who inhabit it see at most only the objects within the compass of their sight, and that, as celestial things are above their senses, they are not in a position to attest the existence thereof, and therefore they are incapable of bearing certain testimony. This is signified more expressly by the following words: "You [*men*] judge according to the flesh," which can only judge of what falls under the carnal senses. "I, said he, judge not any man;" which does not mean that he had no discernment of men's guilt, he who, by divine light, (*a*) "knew [*thoroughly*] what was in man;" but this discernment was all interior, and Jesus Christ did

(*a*) St. John, ii. 25.

not display it in exterior judgment, which he is always entitled to pronounce, but which he has reserved for his second coming, in conformity with what he himself said, speaking of the first coming. (*a*) "God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him. But [*added he*] if I do judge, my judgment is true, because I am not alone; but I and the Father that sent me: and in your law it is written that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that give testimony of myself; and the Father that sent me giveth testimony of me."

However, he who is the subject of the testimony cannot be one of the witnesses; and, in the eye of the law, these two witnesses merely constituted one. That is true in ordinary cases; but this was visibly an exception; for here the subject of the deposition commenced by proving, beyond all doubt, that all he should depose must be conformable to truth. In this case, which was that of all God's envoys, a man might render testimony of himself, and he ought to be believed, because he proved in advance that he should tell the truth. It is needless to repeat that no one had had this advantage in so sensible a manner, nor in so eminent a degree, as Jesus Christ. And, indeed, at this juncture, the Jews, despite of themselves, must have felt this truth, since, instead of objecting to him, as it was natural for them to do, that the party interested cannot bear testimony in his own cause, and that he must seek for another witness; if he wished to produce two, (*b*) "They [*as if not knowing well what to answer*] said therefore to him: Where is thy Father?" Jesus had said quite enough to make his Father known to all upright and unprejudiced minds, and he did not choose to make him further known to those who only sought to make him speak, in order to find in his words matter for new calumnies. Thus, without farther explaining himself, he answered: "Neither me do you know, nor my Father. If you did know me, perhaps you would know my Father also (2)

(*a*) St. John, iii. 17. (*b*) St. John, viii. 19–36.

(2) If you acknowledge that I am the Messias and the Christ, perhaps you will come to know and believe that God is my Father, and that from all eternity I am the Son of the Eternal. A person may absolutely believe the first and not believe the second—as, for

These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, teaching in the temple." This was the most frequented part of it, where he ran the greatest risk in speaking, because it was the easiest place to arrest him. However, "no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come."

His enemies did not withal abandon the design. They were always seeking the means of seizing his person. The knowledge which he had that they were thinking of this scheme at the very moment he was speaking to them, was apparently the reason why he repeated those words which he had already said when they sent messengers to apprehend him: "Again, therefore, Jesus said to them: I go, and you shall seek me;" to which he adds this threat, which he had not as yet made: "And you shall die in your sin. Whither I go [*said he further*] you cannot come."

These hardened men appeared only to pay attention to these latter words, to which they gave a meaning that suited the sanguinary disposition in which they then were. "The Jews therefore said: Will he kill himself? because he said, Whither I go you cannot come." Jesus discarded this gloomy interpretation, by declaring to them, although in mysterious terms, the place whither he was to return, and the reason why they could not follow him thither. "You [*he said to them*], you are from beneath, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world." He neither was so by origin or by affection, and the Jews were so in both these ways; and as it is natural for every thing to return to the place whence it hath its origin, and to which it naturally tends, their term should therefore be the centre of the earth; and his, the sublimity of the highest heaven. Now, between these two points there lies an immense chaos, forming an insurmountable barrier. But, in order that they may not be ignorant of the cause of the fearful evil with which they are threatened, Jesus resumes, and continues thus: "Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins; for if you believe not that I am he [*who I am in reality*], you shall die in your sin (3).

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instance, the Arians and Socinians. With reference to the *perhaps*, see note 4, chap. ix., page 63.

(3) When Jesus Christ saith, *You shall die in your sin*, the particular sin he speaks

Who art thou? they said to him. Jesus said to them: The beginning, I who also speak unto you (4). [*Although now I only reproach you with one sin*] Many things I have to speak and to judge of you. But he that sent me is true, and the things I have heard of him, these same I speak in the world." You, therefore, ought to receive my words as if he himself spoke to you. "And they understood not that he called God his Father."

Then, reverting to the question which they had just put to him, he gave them to understand that he did not wish to give them at that time a more distinct knowledge of what he was than he had already given in the preceding words, inasmuch as he reserved all further information for a future time. He therefore said to them: "When you shall have lifted up the Son of man, then shall you know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as the Father hath taught me, these things I speak. He that sent me is with me, and he hath not left me alone, for I do always the things that

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of is that of infidelity. To die in this sin, is to die in all the other sins; because, as there can be neither justification nor remission without faith, so whilst infidelity remains, all the other sins must remain. Here we have the reason why Jesus Christ might either say, *You shall die in your sins,* or, *You shall die in your sin.*

(4) This is the text translated literally. Interpreters differ widely in the constructions they put upon it. According to several, Jesus Christ replies: *I am the beginning who also speak to you—Je suis le principe de toutes choses, moi qui vous parle.* According to others, he said: *I am what I told you from the beginning.* This explanation is more conformable to the Greek text. Others construe it thus: *Above all things, attend to what I say to you.* A complete volume might be compiled setting forth the reasons upon which these different interpretations are grounded, and the difficulties which they present; and, after a thorough investigation of the matter, the inquirer would still remain undecided as to which construction he should regard as the proper one. This has induced the writer to give merely the very words, without struggling to dissipate the mysterious darkness which God has been pleased to shed around it. Yet, as nothing is useless in Scripture, it is natural to believe that God discovers therein to the pious souls who meditate on the passage, meanings which he is pleased to hide from commentators. God, who wishes that men should be instructed by men, still reserves to himself the right of teaching, through himself, those truths which men cannot teach to his faithful servants—truths which render the disciples, in certain respects, more learned than their masters. This is the hidden manna which is only known to those who are nourished by it—the accomplishment of those words of the Psalmist: I have understood more than all my teachers.—Psalm cxviii. See note 20, chapter ix., page 70, with reference to obscure texts.

please him (5)." The exaltation just spoken of expresses the kind of death which he was to undergo. It was followed, as he had foretold, by the conversion of a considerable part of the nation; and the effect of his death was so prompt, that when he had scarcely expired, and while he was still fastened to the cross, many of the spectators struck their breasts, and confessed that he was truly the Son of God. It was principally in this quality that they were to recognize him, and the cross forced them to do so by an incomprehensible miracle of God's omnipotence, which extracted from the shades of death the light which was to illumine the world, and the glory of his Son from the infamy of an ignominious death. It seems that the virtue of the cross operated by anticipation; for "When he spoke these things, many believed in him." We may, perhaps, feel surprised at this, considering the almost impenetrable depth of his words. We can scarcely understand them when reading and studying them—we who may be said to have the key thereof in the distinct knowledge which we otherwise have of the principles of Christianity. How could they comprehend them—they who as yet had no idea of those truths which we have here such difficulty in unravelling? It is this which has induced a belief, and a well-grounded one, that Jesus Christ, in order to place his instructions within reach of his hearers, gave them much more amply than they are reported in the sacred text, and that what we have of them is only an abstract. Thus we can conceive that what is obscure to us may have been clear to those who heard him; and in this way we can account for the faith of those who believed. Although, even in the supposition that the Saviour's words might not have been understood, there would still be reason to believe that he left no excuse for the infidelity of those who did not believe him. The miracles which he performed rendered it, as we have already said, obligatory on all to believe him, even without understanding what he said.

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(5) Unity of nature renders the Father inseparable from the Son; but God unites himself inseparably with those who always execute his wishes; and, for this reason alone, he would have been inseparable from Jesus Christ. This is what the Saviour here teaches to all the just, who should, therefore, both derive courage and consolation superior to every emergency from this consolatory reflection, viz., God is with me, and he will never desert me so long as I endeavor to execute his wishes.

But it was necessary to instruct and to strengthen the new proselytes. "Jesus said then to those who believed him: If you continue in my word, you shall be my disciples indeed." For you are not established as such by a mere transient acquiescence: you must act on a clear and settled conviction. If to that end you are called upon to make many sacrifices, they shall not be without their reward. Intelligence shall follow faith; and because you have commenced by believing, as a premium for this humble and prompt docility, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

The children of the patriarchs took offence at the terms "make you free." "We are," they answered him, "the seed of Abraham, and we have never been slaves to any man. How sayest thou, You shall be free?" They would have spoken with more truth, had they spoken with more modesty. These men, who were so proud of their liberty, had been slaves in Egypt and in Babylon, and they were then actually subject to the Romans. But Jesus Christ wished to teach them that there is a slavery more shameful still than that exterior and transient slavery which is not incompatible with the liberty of the children of God. It was, therefore, with a view to impress them further with this important truth, and to fix it firmly in their minds, that "Jesus answered them [**with a sort of oath*]: Amen, amen, I say unto you: whosoever committeth sin (6) is the servant

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* *Espèce de serment.*—The French expression of P. De Ligny.

(6) The apostle Saint Peter assigns the reason. Whoever, saith he, allows himself to be vanquished, becomes the slave of the conqueror. In these words, as in those of Jesus Christ, sin is, as it were, personified, and represented, first as an enemy with whom we are at warfare; and then as a master, or rather as a tyrant after victory. We are its slave in many different ways: 1st. By the enslavement to sin itself. The will scarcely retains any force to resist sin, and the habit of committing it becomes a species of necessity. 2d. By subjection to the demon, the father of sin and the tyrant of all sinners, over whom he acquires those rights which he begins to exercise in this life, and which shall render him eternally the master and the executioner of their souls and bodies. 3d. We are enslaved by sin, and we are, in a certain sense, its eternal slave, by the absolute impossibility of bursting its chains. All the strength of creatures is insufficient to effect this liberation, and God alone can do it by the omnipotence of his grace. Oh, sinner! even though you be a freeman—were you even the master of all mankind—you would still be no more than a vile slave, and the lowest of slaves, if you be the greatest of sinners.

of sin. Now, the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever. If, therefore, the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed (7)."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SEQUEL OF THE DISCOURSE.—JEWS CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH; CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL, BY IMITATION.—JESUS CHRIST BEFORE ABRAHAM.—THE JEWS WISH TO STONE HIM.

THE preceding instructions are addressed, at least in part, to those who had believed in the Saviour; not so the words which immediately follow. Although it does not appear that Jesus Christ interrupted his discourse, yet he here treats his hearers as murderers and children of the devil. We cannot conceive how such reproaches could apply to these new believers; it can only be explained in one or other of these two ways. Either the faithful were mixed up with the crowd of unbelievers, where the eye of Jesus Christ well knew how to distinguish them, although there was no outward mark whereby men could know them. In this supposition, the commencement of this discourse might have been to them, and the sequel to others. Or, perhaps these fickle converts, irritated, because he seemed to treat them as slaves, had passed suddenly from faith in his doctrine to hatred towards his person, and entered into the de-

(7) Neither Abraham, nor Moses, nor the prophets possessed the power to emancipate them. These great men themselves could only have been made free by the Son. He had raised them from the rank of slaves to that of children, by associating them through grace in the divine filiation, which he alone possesses by nature. By this title they and all the just who either existed before or after the Incarnation, shall dwell eternally in the house; that is to say, in alliance with God. Whereas, the incredulous Jews are already visibly excluded; so, likewise, impenitent sinners are invisibly excluded at the moment of death; and both one and the other shall be visibly excluded, and in the most conspicuous manner, at the day of judgment—that day when the last and universal discrimination between the children and the slaves shall be made in the presence of all creatures.

sign of putting him to death. This will not appear impossible to those who know the temper of the mob, and the strange revolutions that a single word, when misunderstood, may bring about amongst them in an instant. However, the first of these two explanations is the most natural and the most likely. Whatever it was, Jesus continued to speak thus: (*a*) "I know that you are the children of Abraham; but you seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father; and you do the things which you have seen with your father."

He gives them to understand that, besides Abraham, who was their father according to the flesh, and who was also his, there was, on either side, another father, whose spirit they imbibed, and whose works they copied. God, who is the Father of Jesus Christ by nature, was also his Father in the sense we have just mentioned. It is easy to guess whose children these perverse men were by imitation and resemblance. But, as they were then thinking of Abraham only, "they answered him, and said [*a second time*]: Abraham is our father. If you be the children of Abraham, saith Jesus to them, do [*therefore*] the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill me, a man who have spoken the truth to you, which I have heard of God. This Abraham did not. You do the works of your father."

Then they at last understood that the question was not of carnal filiation, but of that which is according to the Spirit. As they were more disposed to glory in the latter than the former, "they said, therefore, to him [*arrogantly*]: We are not born of fornication; we have one father, even God."

The word fornication is so often employed in Scripture to signify idolatry, that, apparently, they wished to repudiate the charge of being idolaters, since they allege this as a proof that God alone is their father. But the belief in one God is not sufficient to establish this. The Jews of the present time—the impious whom we name Deists—nay, the demons themselves, acknowledge only one God, and, notwithstanding that acknowledgment, they are not his children. No one can ever be such except by adding love to knowledge, and

(*a*) St. John, viii. 37–59.

to the faith of one God that of Jesus Christ, his son and envoy. True faith, faith which justifies, and gives children to God, rests entirely on this double foundation, as Jesus Christ elsewhere said, and as he is going to declare to them from this very hour. "He, therefore, said to them: If God were your father, you would, indeed, love me; for from God I proceeded and came. For I came not of myself, but he sent me. Why [*therefore*] do you not know my speech? Because you cannot hear my word."

Jesus Christ had given them, in point of fact, all the proofs which could be required by reasonable minds. Every vestige of reason was taken away from their incredulity, leaving it none other but the furious and envenomed hatred wherewith they regarded him. It alone stoppeth the ears of these *deaf asps*, so that they will not hear the sweet accent of his voice which charmeth wisely (Psalms, lvii. 5, 6); and truth was odious to them solely because they could not endure him who spoke it to them. Although it be not rare to find among men examples of the like malignity, it seems, nevertheless, to be more natural to the devils. This it was that the Saviour had endeavored to make them understand up to that time, but with delicate caution; yet at length he speaks openly, and says to them, without reserve: "You are of your father, the devil; and the desires of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning (1), and he stood not in the truth; because truth is not in him (2). When

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(1) When he persuaded the first man to eat that fruit, of which it had been said: *What day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.* This blow was mortal to all mankind; and, by striking this blow, the demon slew all men without exception. He is, therefore, pre-eminently a murderer, and in this sense the only murderer, inasmuch as other murderers only accelerate the inevitable effect of the blow which he has struck. The latter, nevertheless, are justly styled his children, because they imitate his wickedness, and that they all do the same kind of mischief as far as it is in their power. But this qualification was still more applicable to the Jews, because, by seeking to murder Jesus Christ, they sought, as far as it lay in their power, and as Saint Peter reproached them for doing, to destroy the author of life—he who, by resuscitating all men, would fully repair the evil which Satan hath done. True it is, that so great a good was to be the fruit of his death. But they knew it not; and their malice would not have been less fatal to mankind than that of Satan, if, whilst they deprived the Saviour of life, they could also have stripped him of his power.

(2) He is no longer inclined to state the truth, which was a consequence of the original rectitude in which he was created. *He stood not in the truth;* therefore he

he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father thereof. But if I say the truth, you believe me not (3)."

This opposition to truth is the second feature of resemblance which they have to him whom he has just called their father. Murder is the first, and he had already reproached them with it, when he made known to them that he was not ignorant of their design to put him to death. But to complete the evidence of this truth, to which they opposed a diabolical obstinacy, "which of you [*said he*] shall convince me of sin?" It was in order to convince them that he defied them; for it is evident that they had accused him long before he had thus defied them to prove the accusation. But they had accused him without proof, and although persuaded in the bottom of their hearts that they accused him unjustly. Wherefore they had nothing to

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once had the truth. The Fathers availed themselves of this expression, to prove to the Manicheans that the devil is not essentially, and of his very nature, bad, since he has not always been so; and if it be said: *When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own*, the meaning is, of his own depraved and vitiated nature. He is the father of lies, inasmuch as he is the first who hath lied, and who hath taught lying either to men or to the wicked angels. There is no truth in him; for he either speaks falsely, or, if he sometimes happens to speak the truth, he always does so with intent to deceive—a disposition which comprises all the malice of lying. We except some rare cases, wherein the omnipotence of God forces him to tell useful truths; but the rage which then seizes upon him proves his determined opposition to the truth, and the implacable hatred which he entertains towards it.

(3) We read in the Greek: *Because* I say the truth, you believe me not. The *si* of the Vulgate appears to have the sense of *because*. This raises a difficulty here. It would seem that to disbelieve any one because he says the truth, is tantamount to not believing him *because* we do believe him; because, being once persuaded that he says the truth, we must actually have believed him, which would make a manifest contradiction in the proposition of the Saviour. Here is the explanation which is given of this difficulty. Jesus Christ had spoken of them and of himself; he had made them humiliating reproaches, and he had rendered glorious testimony to himself. They could not deny the truth of the first, for they had proof thereof in their own conscience; but these reproaches had produced upon them the effect which charitable correction usually produces upon distorted minds, viz.: It had rendered the admonisher odious, and the more odious in proportion to the truth of the reproach. Thenceforward they would no longer believe what he said with reference to himself, and the more advantageous to himself the truths which he advanced, the less were they inclined to believe him. Thus it is that they believed him not, *because* he said the truth to them; that is to say, that they believed not the truths which were advantageous to him, because they were irritated at what he had told them with reference to themselves—truths which had humbled and confounded them.

answer, and the silence to which they were reduced left Jesus Christ that right which a spotless and irreproachable life gives to the just man—that of being believed upon his word.

He resumes, therefore; and, availing himself of the advantage which their tacit avowal gave him, he said to them further: "If I say the truth, you believe me not?" He himself answers his question, and his answer is well calculated to make those tremble who have neither attention nor docility for the divine word: "He [*saith he*] that is of God heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not [*children*] of God."

The word of God is, therefore, well received by those only who listen to it with that tender and respectful attention with which virtuous children always hear the words of their father. How could they bear with this word—they whose father was the capital enemy of God? Wherefore they rejected it with disgust; for they could not oppose it with any reason. He who announced it was the most irreproachable of all men, as they themselves had just admitted by their silence. His doctrine was all-pure and all-holy, and it was proved by numberless miracles, to which no rational mind could raise any objection. What, therefore, could they oppose to it but outrage, the only resource of obstinacy driven to its last hold, and the most energetic avowal of the extremity to which reason has reduced it? "They, therefore, answered him: Do we not say well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered: I have not a devil (4), but I honor my Father; and you, you have dishonored me. But I, I seek not my own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth."

After this grave and modest reply, the Lamb of God, so cruelly outraged, condescended, moreover, to announce to this furious peo-

(4) Jesus Christ formally denies the charge of being a demoniac. As to the reproach of his being a Samaritan, we may say that he replies and does not reply to it. This term was both the name of a people and the name of a sect. He seems to meet in his reply the reproach attached to it as a sectarian designation, saying: *I honor my Father*, which the Samaritans did not do. Inasmuch as the term was the name of a people, he could not consider it a reproach—he who was shortly to unite all people under the same law, and make but one people of Jew, Samaritan, and Gentile. Besides, generally speaking, the ground of just reproaches is not the nation, but the morals; and *in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh justice is acceptable to him.*—(Acts, x. 35.)

ple truths more agreeable than those which they had before forced him to speak to them. One of these was to make them feel the infinite difference which there was between him and the arch-murderer, by whom they accused him of being possessed. He declared it to them in these terms: "Amen, amen, I say to you, if any man keep my word, he shall not see death forever (5)."

When hearts are once perverted, they turn every thing into poison. This magnificent promise only irritated them the more; and, because they did not comprehend its mysterious meaning, they treated it as absurd or blasphemous. "Now we know [*say they*] that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest: If any man keep my word, he shall not taste death forever. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead: whom dost thou make thyself?"

He is about to make himself what he really is—that is to say, the Eternal One. But he first recalls to their minds the proofs of his mission; and, repeating what he had said upon another occasion, that, if he bore testimony to himself, his testimony would not be legitimate, but that there was another who bore testimony unto him, "he answered [*still in the same sense*]: If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom you say, that he is your God. And you have not known him (6), but I know him; and if I say that I know him not, I shall be like to you, a liar. But I do know him, and do keep his word."

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(5) He shall be preserved from eternal death. This is the common interpretation. Thus these words, *He shall not see death forever*, signify: He shall receive, by the resurrection, a life which shall never again be followed by death. Other interpreters understand the expression as referring to the life of grace—that life, eternal in its nature, as we have said elsewhere, and which can never be lost except through the fault of him who has received it. If we add, that it is this life which confers the right to that immortal life which shall come after the resurrection, we have both explanations condensed into one.

(6) They had a speculative knowledge of God; but they did not know him, or rather they denied him in practice. For, not to execute his will is denying his authority and his rights, and taking part with those *who profess that they know God, but in their works they deny him* (Titus, i. 16). There was, therefore, one sense in which they could not say with truth that they knew God; furthermore, it is in this sense that Saint John hath said (1 Ep. ii. 4): *He who saith that he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

Then, returning to Abraham, whom they regarded as the first of human beings, he declares in these words his infinite superiority over him: "Abraham, your father, rejoiced that he might see my day; he saw it (7), and was glad. The Jews said to him: Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham (8)? Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am." They caught a glimpse through these few words of the equality with God which Jesus Christ attributed to himself; and, as if he had blasphemed, "they took up stones, therefore, to cast at him; but Jesus hid himself (9), and went out of the temple."

Although his words then produced such strange effects, we ought not to be surprised that he should have uttered them. Thenceforth they were not useless to all, since we have already seen that several believed in him; but, moreover, Jesus knew that what he said would subsequently be written, and that these same expressions, which excited against him the fury of his fellow-citizens, should one day insure to him the homage of all nations.

But if obstinate minds never find it difficult to elude the force of truth, and to resist all arguments, there are yet proofs so certain and so palpable, that we must either yield to them, or acknowledge that we do not wish to be convinced. It seems that Jesus Christ, before quitting Jerusalem, wished to give its inhabitants a proof of this. Here is the recital thereof, or rather the picture, drawn in such natural and lively colors, that we have not sought to add any thing to it, being persuaded that any thing which might be added, for the purpose of shedding light upon it, would only mar its beauty.

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(7) Whether during his life, by a prophetic light which made him acquainted, by anticipation, with the mystery of the incarnation; or whether in Limbo, by the revelation thereof made at the moment when the word became incarnate.

(8) Jesus Christ, according to the common opinion, had not yet completed his thirtieth year. Those who prolong the farthest the years of his mortal life agree that he had not completed forty years. We do not know for certain the reason which made the Jews speak as if he had approached his fiftieth year.

(9) He rendered himself invisible, or else he mingled in the crowd in such a way as not to be perceptible to these infuriated men.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE MAN BORN BLIND.—JESUS IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

(*a*) "JESUS passing by, saw a man who was blind from his birth; and his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind (1)? Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents (2); but that the works of God should

(*a*) St. John, ix. 1–41.

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(1) Temporal evils may be the punishment of the sins of parents. *I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation* (Exodus, xx. 5). Wherefore, it is not surprising that the disciples should inquire whether the blindness inherent in this man from his mother's womb, was not a punishment entailed upon him by the sins of his parents; but we are ignorant of what was passing in their minds when they inquired whether his own sins were not the cause of his blindness. Did they believe in the pre-existence of souls, and could this platonic notion have been conveyed to the Jews of Judea by those who were called *hellenists*—that is to say, who resided among the Greeks? Or else did they think that God punished by anticipation the sins which he foresaw would be committed at a subsequent period? Or finally, could their question have had the following meaning which several interpreters attach to it, viz.: this individual not having deserved his blindness by any personal sin, inasmuch as no man sins before he is born, is it then the sin of his parents which is the cause of his blindness? We may choose for ourselves amongst these several conjectures which divide the learned. Two things are certain: one, that the disciples did not attribute to original sin the disgrace of this poor man; could they think that all men should be born blind, or deprived of some of their senses? The other certainty is, that they were persuaded there was no affliction in this life which was not the punishment of some sin; in which latter case they were deceived, as we see by the answer of the Saviour.

(2) They had sinned, the blind man, his father, and his mother; but none of their sins was the cause of this blindness. This is the signification of the Saviour's answer, whence it manifestly follows that all the pains of this life are not caused by sin, and that there are some afflictions which are not punishments. Such were those of the Mother of God—that Mother who was conceived without sin, and preserved from all actual sin without exception, and who, nevertheless, was transpierced with a sword of sorrow. Nor need we cite so great an example; for the pains of baptized children before they could have committed any sin, are also an illustration of this truth. These pains are, indeed, the consequences of original sin; but they are not its chastisement: they do not punish it, and they punish nothing in them, because there is no longer any thing to punish in them;



The Good Shepherd.

be made manifest in him (3). I must work the works of him that sent me (4) whilst it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes (5), and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloë (which is interpreted, Sent) (6). The blind man went, therefore, and washed, and he

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for there is no longer any matter requiring punishment, if there be nothing more to be expiated. Now, it is the common belief of the Church, that, in little children who die after baptism, there is no further impediment to retard their entry into heaven. Thus the Council of Trent has expressed itself: wherefore, it teaches that there is in them no stain of sin to be wiped away. Whence it further ensues that, supposing there was not any original sin, these pains might still exist, inasmuch as we find them endured by those to whom this sin is entirely remitted, both as to the fault and the penalty thereof.

(3) Jesus Christ informs us that, independent of sin, the manifestation of the works of God is one of the causes of the evils of this life. The trial of the just is another cause of them: *Because you were agreeable to God*, said the angel to Tobias, *it was necessary that you should be proved by temptation;* that is to say, by affliction. We cannot see to what end the sufferings of little children may tend. But to whom have all the divine secrets been revealed? Who knows whether God doth not thereupon account with them; and whether, by a purely gratuitous mercy, he doth not glorify those most in whom he finds, more than in others, the image of the sufferings of his beloved Son? This conjecture is not entirely without foundation. The Church seems to recognize in the children massacred for the cause of religion, a sanctity superior to that of other children; yet the will of the first has no more part in their martyrdom, than the will of the second has in their sufferings.

(4) Jesus Christ has never ceased to act. He only speaks here of those works which he had to perform during his visible sojourn here on earth. The subsequent words: *The night cometh when no man can work*, comprise a general maxim which is more for us than for him. What he adds, that *he is the light of the world*, refers to the action that he is going to perform; and this action, which is the re-establishment of corporal sight, is the figure of the spiritual light wherewith he is come to enlighten souls.

(5) It would seem that this was more calculated to deprive of sight, than to restore it. Jesus Christ wished to show that all means are equal to him, and that none was necessary to him. Spittle is employed to make known the wondrous properties of his adorable body. By mixing it with the earth, he discovers to us the hand of the Creator, who, after having formed man from the slime of the earth, makes the same matter which had served for the composition of his work, subservient to its cure. He sends the blind man to the bath of Siloë, to test his faith and his obedience. Both one and the other appeared with admirable lustre; for he did not reason as Naaman had done, when the prophet Eliseus sent him to bathe in the Jordan. He received the order, and executed it forthwith, without advancing a single word of opposition.

(6) In the application of clay to the eyes, Saint Augustine recognizes the unction of the catechumens; and in the bath, baptism and its miraculous effects. All here is mys-

came seeing. The neighbors therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he; but others, No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thy eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloë, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. They said to him: Where is he? He saith: I know not. They then bring him that had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again, therefore, the Pharisees asked him how he had received his sight, but he said to them: He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see. Some, therefore, of the Pharisees said: This man is not of God, who keep eth not the Sabbath. But others said: How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division amongst them. They say, therefore, to the blind man again: What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes? He said: He is a prophet. The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that received his sight, and asked them, saying: Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not. Ask himself: he is of age, let him speak for himself. These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed amongst themselves, that if any man should confess Jesus to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue; therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask him.

"The Jews, therefore, called the man again that had been born blind, and said to him: Give glory to God, we know that this man is a sinner. If he be a sinner [*said he to them*], I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. They said then

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terious, even the very name of the fountain. He informs us that the only true baptism, that baptism of which the other baptisms could have been only figurative, is the baptism of the Ambassador by pre-eminence, Jesus Christ.

to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy eyes? He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard; why would you hear it again? Will you also become his disciples? They reviled him, therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses; but as to this man, we know not from whence he is. The man answered to them: Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners (7); but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. From the beginning of the world, it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, he could not do any thing. They answered and said to him: Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? Thou hast seen him, Jesus said to him; and it is he that talketh to thee. I believe, Lord, said he then; and, falling down, he adored him."

The faith of this man, compared with the incredulity of the others, gave occasion to the Saviour to announce two prodigies, the first of which was to be the fruit of his mission, and the second a consequence thereof. "For judgment (8), said he, I am come into this

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(7) God may listen to sinners, even when they ask for miracles. *Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and done many miracles in thy name? And then will I profess unto them: I never knew you; depart from me, you that work iniquity.* The proposition of the blind man was not, therefore, utterly without its exception; yet its truth was sufficiently general to make it proverbial. And, if we like to confine it to miracles, we may say that, when the blind man spoke, it was true to its full extent, inasmuch as we do not find a single miracle in the Old Testament which had ever been wrought by an individual that was not recognized to be a just and holy man. Those miracles which God has since wrought, through the ministry of vicious men, besides being very rare, proved satisfactorily the sanctity of the doctrine which they preached, and not that of the preachers themselves.

Generally speaking, when miracles are wrought in confirmation of the faith, they constitute a strong presumption of the holiness of him who operates them, but they are not an infallible proof of this fact.

(8) We also designate as the judgments of God certain arrangements of his providence,

world; that they who see not, may see; and they who see, may become blind (9)." These words alluded to the miracle which he had just wrought. But the vision and the blindness which they expressed must be understood in a spiritual sense. In point of fact, they were taken in this sense: for "some of the Pharisees who were with him heard, and they said unto him: Are we also blind? If you were blind, Jesus said to them, you should not have sin; but now you say: We see. Your sin remaineth," without excuse.

This sin is the sin of incredulity, excusable in those who have none of the knowledge necessary in order to believe, but inexcusable when a person hath sufficient light to arrive at the fulness of faith, supposing that he wished to avail himself of his information. Such were the Pharisees, who had in the Scriptures that which should have led them to the knowledge of the true Messiah, if they had sought it with an upright heart. And to declare as they did,

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the secret of which has not been revealed to us. These are the judgments of which we usually say that we must adore without seeking to understand them. Saint Paul spoke of them, when he said that *the judgments of God are incomprehensible, and that his ways are impenetrable.*—Romans, ii.

(9) This does not mean to convey that their blindness was one of the objects of the coming of Jesus Christ, but, as has been already stated, this blindness was the result thereof. This is the entire signification of the particle *that* (*afin que*), which, according to the usage of holy writ, frequently conveys nothing further than the fact of one thing having occasioned another, or merely preceded it. If the imperfect light of the law was a means of arriving at the knowledge of the Gospel, we may also say that, in one sense, it was an obstacle thereto. We fancy that we see all, when we have really seen but the half; and because what we have is good, we reject what is better, and what would really make us perfect, falsely believing it calculated to destroy that good which we possess. This is what occurred to the Pharisees; and the partial light which they possessed rendered them blind. By a contrary process, the absurdities of paganism were no slight aid to the conversion of the Gentiles; for they were immersed in such palpable errors, that they could not be imbued with the notion of having attained the truth, or having had a glimpse of the light in the midst of such profound darkness. Hence it happened, that when the light of the Gospel appeared, these benighted pagans being thoroughly convinced of their blindness, opened their eyes, and were fully enlightened.

The Mahometan must always experience more difficulty in his conversion than the idolater, and the Jew than the Mahometan, because the Mahometan acknowledges one God, and the Jew also acknowledges a revelation.

Incredulity seems to be the natural fruit of light mingled with darkness, and of imperfect knowledge; and perhaps the reason why the times we live in are so fertile in incredulity, is, because they exceed all former times in the number of half-enlightened minds.

that they had that knowledge, was equivalent to a confession that they did not sin through ignorance, and that if they saw not, it was because they did not wish to see.

All agree that what follows was pronounced by Jesus Christ immediately after the preceding; yet we do not see distinctly the connection between the one and the other. Amongst the various ways of explaining the matter, this appears the most satisfactory. The Saviour had just received the man born blind, whom the Pharisees had driven from the synagogue. The latter had no doubt but that, by this species of excommunication, they had cut him off from the society of the children of God. The contrary was precisely the case. Admitted by Jesus Christ, he had entered, because Jesus Christ is the only gate leading thereto. The Pharisees, who refused to enter by this one gate of the sheepfold of the Lord, could, therefore, no longer form a part thereof; this is an evident conclusion Much less could they be the shepherds thereof, although they arrogated to themselves that title and its functions. This is the point on which the Saviour insists; and it was of extreme importance at the moment when he spoke. Many of the Jews, attracted by the lustre of his miracles, and checked, at the same time, by the authority of their ancient masters, knew not to whom they should give the preference, and it was necessary to inform them. He said, then, in that affirmative tone which he took when he wished to rivet attention: (*a*) "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice. He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out; and when he hath led out his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. But a stranger they follow not, but fly from him, because they know not the voice of strangers.

"This proverb Jesus spoke to them; but they understood not what he spoke to them." Not that his words were ambiguous, but that the application was not equally clear, especially to those who

(*a*) St. John, x. 1–19.

sought to construe it for themselves in a bad sense. "He, therefore, said to them again: Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All others, as many as have come, are thieves and robbers, and the sheep heard them not. I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. He shall go in, and go out, and shall find pastures. The thief cometh not but for to steal, to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly."

These last words lead naturally to another figure, under which the Saviour is also going to represent himself. This one, more tender than the first, is perhaps the most affecting image that he himself could have given us of his charity towards men. He continues, therefore, thus: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and flieth. The wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep. And the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling, and he hath no care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd: I know mine, and mine know me, as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Did any one ever see a more tender charity, or a more generous love? But, instead of the admiration and the gratitude which are due to them, who knows but that these grovelling souls only found simplicity and folly in that heroic disinterestedness which goes to the length of sacrificing his life for others? Yet it might so happen that his death, which was to be a violent one, might not appear to be voluntary, and that the world might not be thoroughly persuaded that he had given for his sheep a life which should be taken from him by force. To anticipate and prevent these errors, he declares two things: one, that in dying, he shall accomplish the wishes of his Father, ever dictated by infinite wisdom; the other, that he is perfect master of his own life, and is able to resume it after having given it up; which proves the perfect liberty of his sacrifice, and shows forth, in the most favorable light, the immense bounty of the Father, who delivers his only Son; and that of the Son, who deliv-

ers himself for unfortunate creatures, from whom he had nothing to expect, and to whom he owed nothing but chastisement. He concludes, therefore, by these words: "Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from me; but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

"A dissension arose again among the Jews for these words. Many of them said: He hath a devil, and is mad: why hear ye him? Others said: These are not the words of one who hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

END OF PART I.



PART II.

FROM THE MISSION OF THE SEVENTY-TWO DISCIPLES UNTIL THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ELECTION, MISSION, AND INSTRUCTION OF THE SEVENTY-TWO DISCIPLES.—THEIR RETURN.—NAMES WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.—HAPPY THE EYES THAT HAVE SEEN JESUS CHRIST!—HIS YOKE IS SWEET, AND HIS BURDEN IS LIGHT.—LOVE OF GOD AND OF OUR NEIGHBOR.—THE GOOD SAMARITAN.—MARTHA AND MARY.

It is commonly thought that Jesus then departed from Jerusalem to return into Galilee. Before his departure, or after his arrival—for we find nothing decisive on the subject, nor whether the new mission which he set on foot at that time was for Judea or for Galilee—however the matter may be, it is written that (*a*) "after these things the Lord appointed also other seventy-two, and he sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he was to come (1); and he said to them," as he said to the other apostles when he sent them to exercise the same ministry: "The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he send laborers into the harvest. Go [*he further added*]; behold I send you as lambs among the wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes, and salute no man by the way (2). Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be to

(*a*) St. Luke, x. 1–12.

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(1) He intended shortly to follow them in person. At present, also, he follows them, but by his grace. For in the ordinary conduct of God, preaching, as Saint Gregory says, goes in advance, and the Lord comes to dwell in our souls after the hallowed word hath prepared the way. Thus all preachers may be called the precursors of Jesus Christ.

(2) This discourse of the Saviour is merely the repetition of the first part of that which he made to the apostles, page 180, and seq., chapter xxiii., Part I., to which we refer for the illustrations. However, there is some slight difference. These words, for instance: *Salute no man by the way*, are only found in this passage. They merely interdict those civilities which might cause considerable delay; but not a passing salute, with-

this house; and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. In the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Remove not from house to house; and into what city soever you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you (3). Heal the sick that are therein, and say to them: The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you not, going forth into the streets thereof, say: Even the very dust of your city (4) that cleaveth to us, we wipe off against you. Yet know this [*you must yet say when quitting them*], know that the kingdom of God is at hand. I say to you, it shall be more tolerable at that day for Sodom than for that city.

(*a*) "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein were done the most of his miracles, for that they had not done penance. Woe to

(*a*) St. Matthew, xi. 20–23.

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out stopping; as if we were to say: If you meet any of your acquaintance, do not tarry to pay long compliments to him.

(3) One of our brilliant writers, whom religion shall never reckon amongst its panegyrists, has asserted that Christianity is replete with good sense. His assertion was correct, had he not given it as a great discovery of his own. Applying the assertion to the passage before us, nothing could be more rational than this order issued to the disciples: *Eat such things as are set before you.* If the repast be good, partake of it with thanksgiving: if it be not good, with resignation. Bad example would be the result of an apostle appearing too fastidious about his food. But supposing he restricts himself within the limits of sobriety, he would display too great scrupulosity, were he to decline the viands which are served up to him, on the ground of their being too delicate. The apostleship is like warfare, wherein an individual sometimes fares highly—at other times is reduced to the most frugal fare. We must know how, like Saint Paul, to avail ourselves of abundance when it is offered to us, and to endure want when it becomes necessary. One day repairs the other, and enables us to retain the strength which is necessary in order to endure the painful toils of the ministry. There is also this additional reason—that were we to abstain from touching the viands laid before us, we would grieve the charitable hosts, who deem it a religious duty to treat in their very best style those who exhaust themselves preaching the Gospel. I question whether this alone was not a sufficient reason to prevent Jesus from fasting at the table of Martha and Mary.

(4) Elsewhere, Part I., page 181, note 3, this dust is shaken off the feet in testimony against the inhabitants. Here the act is a sign of detestation. By shaking off the dust, the disciples declare that they wish to carry off nothing from that accursed city, lest the malediction which it hath drawn upon itself should remain in the very dust which they might carry off with them, and pursue them even beyond the accursed boundaries.

thee, Corazin! Woe to thee, Bethsaida! for, if in Tyre and Sidon (5) had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. (*a*) And thou, Capharnaum, shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt go down even unto hell. For if in Sodom had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, perhaps it had remained unto this day." The reason for this difference of treatment is found in the following words which the Saviour addressed to his disciples: (*b*) "He [*saith he to them*] that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me"—words which teach us that to despise God in the person of his ambassadors is the greatest of all crimes, since it is that which of all shall be the most rigorously punished.

(*c*) "Now, the seventy-two returned with joy [*at the success of their mission*]. Lord [*they say*], the devils also are subject to us in thy name. Jesus said to them: I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven." Interpreters are not agreed as to the meaning of this mysterious expression. Can it mean that when the disciples cast out the demons by virtue of the name of Jesus, the Saviour saw the chief of the infernal legions falling from the upper region of the air, whence

(*a*) St. Luke, x. 15; St. Matthew, xi. 23.

(*b*) St. Luke, x. 16.

(*c*) St. Luke, x. 17–24.

(5) Wherefore hath not Jesus Christ conferred upon those who would have profited by them those abundant graces which he lavished upon those who have abused them? This is one of those judgments of God, the depth of which we must adore without endeavoring to penetrate. This much, however, we are bound to believe: 1st. That the inhabitants of Tyre and of Sidon were not predestined, since God had not conferred upon them the graces which would have certainly saved them. 2d. Although they had not received those graces, the effect of which is certain, yet they shall be justly condemned, inasmuch as they have received the succors which were necessary and sufficient, in order to enable them to abstain from those crimes which shall justly be the cause of their condemnation. 3d. Those who have received superabundant grace shall be judged with more rigor than those who have merely received enough; the hell of the Christian shall, therefore, be more rigorous than that of the idolater; and, generally speaking, the difference shall depend less upon the crimes committed, than upon the graces which have been spurned or rejected; inasmuch as greater crimes, such as were those of Sodom, with lesser graces, incur less severe punishment than lesser crimes with greater graces.

he exercised his tyranny over mankind? or may he not have alluded at that moment to the first fall of Lucifer, when, in punishment of his revolt, that proud spirit was hurled from the height of heaven to the bottom of the abyss? If the first of these two meanings appears the most natural, the second is not unlikely; for although the disciples acknowledged that they had done nothing, except in the name of their Master, to whom they referred all the glory of their success, they might, nevertheless, feel a secret complacency. Whilst acknowledging that we are merely the instruments of God, we may still pride ourselves on being preferred to the rest of human beings to serve as instruments for great things. Thus, in order to repress the pride which was rising up in his disciples, or merely to anticipate its growth, the example of Satan could not be more seasonably introduced. The sequel is in perfect keeping with this explanation. "Behold [*continues the Saviour*], I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy (6), and nothing shall hurt you; but yet rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice (7) in this, that your names are written in heaven (8)."

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(6) The serpents and the scorpions are called *the power of the enemy*, inasmuch as every thing which is noxious in nature is instrumental to the demon for the purpose of injuring men.

(7) Rejoice in the solid rather than in the showy—in the durable rather than the fleeting—in what renders us agreeable to God rather than in that which makes us appear great before men. The lowest degree of virtue is more valuable than the power of raising the dead.

(8) Names may be written in heaven, either by predestination or by actual justice. When written in the first manner, they remain there forever, because the absolute decrees of God are immutable. When written in the second way, the names may be effaced, because man may lose the justice which gave him a right to the kingdom of heaven. Now, in reference to which of these two methods of recording names in heaven did Jesus Christ say to the disciples that their names are written in heaven? This is a matter of which we know nothing; and the Saviour not having explained himself further, we should be rash if we were to venture to pronounce affirmatively for either of these constructions. The most probable is, that he only informs them that their names are written in heaven by the title of justice. Had he declared to them that they were predestined, this favor, one of the greatest which God can confer in this world, would have been conferred upon the disciples, and refused to the apostles—a state of things which cannot be conceived. It is quite true that the latter were confirmed in grace, and that their predestination was certain; but they themselves had no certainty as to the fact,

The best of all masters could not be insensible to the progress which his beloved disciples were making in the knowledge of the things of heaven. "In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, and said: I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones (9). Yea, Father [*thou hast done so*], for so it hath seemed good in thy sight (10)."

Jesus spoke thus in order that his disciples, who received this revelation immediately from him, might not be ignorant that it came from his Father, who was for this reason the final term of their gratitude. But this truth ought not to conceal another, viz., that the Son, as well as the Father, has this revelation at his disposal, and that in communicating it always in accordance with the views and desires of the Father, the Son does, nevertheless, so communicate with equal independence, since he only imparts it to those whom he pleases to enlighten. Such are the great truths comprised in these

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and they always believed that they might sin and be lost. We have a proof of this in Saint Paul. We can have no reason for doubting that he also must have received this precious assurance, if such had been given to the other apostles. And yet he said: *But I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away.* Could a man assured of his predestination have used such language as that?

He that shall overcome, said Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse, iii. 5, *I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.* Doth not this mode of expression seem to say that names written in the book of life may still be effaced, and does it not confirm the explanation which we have stated to be the most probable?

(9) Saint Chrysostom judiciously remarks, that Jesus Christ doth not bless his Father, because those things are hidden from the wise, but because they are revealed to the simple. The expression is tantamount to this: I bless thee, my Father, for having revealed to the simple these mysteries of which thou hast *left the wise in ignorance. To hide* has no more extensive signification here. In this sense, these mysteries have been hidden from the wise, who have not sought to discover them, and revealed to the simple, who have only sought them because God conferred upon them the desire of obtaining the revelation thereof. Justice is exhibited towards the first class—pure mercy is displayed in reference to the second class. *To the righteous a light is risen up in darkness.* Those who are not righteous have not descried the light. It is apparent that, in reference to both classes, *the Lord is merciful, and compassionate, and just.*—Psalm cxi.

(10) God owes it to himself to love all his works. *Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made.*—Book of Wisdom, xi. 25. But he owes to no one the favors and the graces of his own choice, of which we should seek no other cause than his good pleasure.

brief expressions: "All things are delivered unto me by my Father; and no one knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son; and to whom the Son will reveal him."

"Then turning to his disciples, he said," as he had before said to the apostles when he explained to them the mysteries of the kingdom of God: "Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see! for I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them."

Afterwards, addressing himself to the people who thronged in crowds to listen to him, (*a*) "Come [*said this charitable Saviour*], come to me, all you that labor, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart (11), and you shall find rest to your souls; for my yoke is sweet, and my burden is light."

About that time (it appears likely that this fact took place in a synagogue): "A certain lawyer stood up tempting Jesus, saying: Master, what must I do to possess eternal life? Jesus said to him: What is written in the law? How readest thou? He answering, said: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind (12),

(*a*) St. Matthew, xi. 28–30.

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(11) And you shall find that I am not a hard and haughty master, as earthly masters usually are, but that I am a master full of meekness and affability. Such is the literal meaning of these words. But it is, moreover, so evident that Jesus Christ teaches us, by his example, to be meek and humble of heart, and experience has so well taught that in these virtues alone can true peace be found, that it is not surprising if this text is usually made use of to express both these truths.

(12) To love God with all one's heart, with all one's soul, with all one's strength, and with one's whole mind, is tantamount to giving to God all one's affections, sensibilities, thoughts, and works; it is, in a word, perfectly loving God. This perfection is not attainable in this life, wherein the gold of charity is never without alloy, and in heaven alone hath this precept its full accomplishment. However, as regards perfection, it is an obligation in this life to tend incessantly thereunto, and to labor in augmenting our love, until it engrosses all our mind, replenishes our whole heart, and exhausts all our strength. We should infinitely love a being infinitely amiable. God alone can thus acquit himself towards himself. Yet the creature, whilst incapable of infinite love, should at least love God without any other limits than those which God hath given to his capacity for lov-

and thy neighbor as thyself (13). Thou hast answered right, said Jesus to him: this do, and thou shalt live."

By giving himself the answer to his own question, the lawyer showed clearly enough that he had not put the question with the design of obtaining information. When we wish to learn a thing, we seek not to be informed of what we already know. He had, therefore, some other intention, which could not have been a good one: the bystanders had at least a right to suspect him of some evil purpose Whereupon, "willing to justify himself," he put another question still more difficult to be resolved, especially at that time, when the duties of charity were not so clearly known as they have been since the promulgation of the Gospel. "He said [*therefore*] to Jesus: And who is my neighbor? Jesus answering, said: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who stripped him, and having wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead. It chanced that a certain priest went down the same way, and seeing him, passed by; in like manner also a Levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by; but a certain Samar-

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ing; this is the meaning of that expression of Saint Bernard, which comprises a very exact proposition: *The measure of loving God is to love him immeasurably.*

To think that we love God as much as he deserves to be loved, exhibits our utter ignorance of him; and to think that we love him as much as we might love him, displays a want of self-knowledge.

(13) And not as much as ourselves; for we have a right to the preference, and, in certain circumstances, we are bound to give that preference to ourselves. For instance, we are bound to prefer our own salvation to the salvation of any other person, and even to the salvation of the whole world. But we are obliged to sacrifice our own life, if necessary, for the eternal salvation of one single soul. Those who inquire whether we should sacrifice our own perfection for the salvation of our neighbor, forget that to labor for the salvation of one's neighbor is a more perfect work than all those we might execute in lieu of this performance. With regard to corporal emoluments, whilst we are entitled by right to prefer ourselves to others, we are not bound so to act. On the contrary, it is a highly perfect charity to prefer others to ourselves; and the right of preferring others to ourselves only arises when the same wants press concurrently on both parties. Thus, I am entitled by right not to yield up to another what is absolutely necessary for my own life; but I am obliged to sacrifice my superfluity for the wants of another, my comforts for his necessities; and to convey this in the language of Scripture, I can keep for myself the morsel of bread necessary for my sustenance, and the only tunic I have to cover myself; but if I have an entire loaf, I should divide it with him who is hungry; and if I have two tunics, I should give one to him who has none.

itan being on his journey, came near him, and seeing him, was moved with compassion. Going up to him, he bound his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two pence, and gave to the host, and said: Take care of him, and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I at my return will repay thee. Which of these three, in thy opinion, was neighbor (14) to him that fell among the robbers? But he said: He that showed mercy to him. Whereupon Jesus said to him: Go, and do thou in like manner."

Jesus then made some evangelical excursions. "It came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a town, and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who, sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard his word." At the same time that she nourished her piety, she fulfilled a duty of civility. It was only reasonable that whilst they were waiting for the repast, some inmate of the house should remain with a guest so distinguished. "But Martha was busy about much serving; who stood and said: Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me. Martha,

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(14) That is to say, who treated him as a neighbor; for this was the point in question. The word neighbor is a relative term: if I be your neighbor, you are my neighbor. We may, therefore, say, I am your neighbor, in order to signify, I regard you as my neighbor. It must have been so understood by the Jews, because the doctor of the law, a man belonging to a cavilling profession, does not here object to these terms. This statement teaches us three things: 1st, that the quality of neighbor extends to all men without exception, since, despite of national antipathy and opposition in religion, the Samaritan is neighbor to the Jew, and the Jew to the Samaritan: 2d, that there is no real charity in regard to our neighbor, except what is proved by actions: 3d, that the simple, when their dispositions are good, know their duties better than the learned, since it is a Samaritan who here gives a lesson to Jews, and a layman to priests and doctors.

These truths, which there can be no doubt that our Saviour wished to teach the doctor by the example of the Samaritan, gives us to understand, in perhaps the clearest manner, that this is a real statement, and not simply a parable. Parables may serve to develop a truth, and to render it more sensible, but it is only a real fact, and not a supposition, that can be set forth by way of example. You cannot prove to a Christian that he can learn from a Mahometan charity towards one's neighbor, by pretending that the Mahometan had exercised it in a circumstance wherein a great number of Christians do not exercise it. But if this Mahometan has exercised it in point of fact, his example is proof, and no further reply can be made.

Martha, the Lord answering, said to her, thou art careful and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary (15). Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her (16)." By this short answer he apologized for those who give to the repose of contemplation all the time which is not engrossed by duty; and he vindicated them beforehand from the impious railleries which they have to encounter from libertines, and the indecent sarcasms often launched against them by impious cavillers.

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(15) Several interpreters understand this expression as referring to a single sort of food, whence they conclude that the Saviour here reproved Martha's superfluous care in preparing several dishes. This sense, besides conveying a moral, appears to flow naturally enough from the text. However, as it is stated that Jesus Christ travelled with his disciples—and we cannot believe but that the two sisters invited them with their Master—a single dish, supposing even that it was sufficient in quantity, could not with decency be presented before so numerous a company; and this construction, so natural in itself, is already met by this first difficulty. Another more embarrassing one is, that it appears, by the sequel of the discourse, that the Saviour here opposes occupation to occupation—that of Mary to that of Martha. *Mary*, saith he, *hath chosen the best part*, which is equivalent to saying that that of Martha is not so good. What, then, else can the *one thing necessary* signify, but the affair of salvation in which Mary was directly occupied, whilst Martha, whose occupation was not counter to it, labored only indirectly thereunto? for the direct object of her labor was bodily refreshment, which cannot be the only thing necessary, but which may bear a reference to it, and which actually did bear a reference to it in the circumstance wherein Martha found herself placed. The part which she had chosen was, therefore, good; but that of Mary, who was solely occupied with Jesus Christ and his speech, was best.

Contemplation is better than action, which is not obligatory; but if the action were obligatory, contemplation substituted in its stead would be but an illusion.

The union of both constitutes the perfection of this life, in which prayer is necessary, and labor indispensable.

(16) Action, which presupposes wants and miseries, shall pass away with this life, which is replete with them. Contemplation shall remain, or rather, shall be more perfect, when, instead of that feeble ray of the eternal splendor which it merely catches a glimpse of here below, it shall see that light in its source, and the divine essence in itself.

CHAPTER XL.

THE LORD'S PRAYER, ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE.—PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER.—GOD GIVES WHAT IS NECESSARY.—THE PURE EYE.—THE PHARISEES CONDEMNED.

We shall give the following facts in the order in which they are placed by one of the evangelists. It is impossible to assign them precise dates as to time and place. Had we a knowledge of these matters, our curiosity might be more gratified; but would we be more edified thereby, or receive more salutary instruction? The reader will also meet with some discourses of the Saviour which seem to be only a repetition of other discourses which we have already noted. So they are in point of fact, not because one evangelist states over again what another evangelist had already stated (those statements which are repeated in this manner are only once given in this work), but because the Saviour himself pronounced them more than once, and in different circumstances. Moreover, as it scarcely ever happens that they are exactly alike, it will not be considered irksome to read over again what Jesus Christ has not deemed it useless to repeat.

(*a*) "It came to pass that as he was in a certain place praying, when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him: Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. He said to them: When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come; give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us, and lead us not into temptation."

This was a good opportunity to make better known to the disciples the utility and efficacy of prayer. Wherefore "Jesus then said to them [*making use of figures and sensible comparisons, according to his usual custom*]: Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and shall say to him: Friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine is come off his journey to me, and I have not what to set before him; and he from within should an-

(*a*) St. Luke, xi. 1–13.

swer and say: Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. Yet if he shall continue knocking, I say to you: Although he will not rise and give him, because he is a friend; yet because of his importunity he will rise, and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you: Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

Thus, provided that perseverance be joined to fervor, it is certain, we should even say that it is of faith, that the prayer will be heard, even when it does not appear to be so. For, and this it is which renders this faith doubtful and vacillating, it frequently happens that prayer has the qualities we have just spoken of, and yet we do not see it followed by any effect. Thereupon doubt arises, and confidence grows weak. The reason is, that we do not consider how we often ask for that which, in point of fact, would be injurious to us. We are ignorant of the real nature of what we ask, and this is the reason why we ask it. God knows exactly what the thing is, and, consequently, he refuses it to us. Shall we call this rigor or obduracy on his part? But his goodness does not stop here. In place of the apparent good and real evil which we ask for, he gives us that which is really salutary, what we should have asked for by name, and in preference to every thing else, if we knew its properties as he does, or if we had foreseen its consequences. Thus it is that he really grants while appearing to refuse, and such is the sense concealed under these words which the Saviour adds: "Which of you, if you ask his father for bread, will he give him a stone? or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask him."

The following maxims had been already pronounced in the presence of the apostles, but it is highly probable that the greater part of the disciples had not heard them. Jesus then repeats them, and says: (*a*) "No man lighteth a candle, and putteth it in a hidden

(*a*) St. Luke, xi. 33–54.

place, nor under a bushel; but upon a candlestick, that they that come in may see the light (1). The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body will be lightsome; but if it be evil, thy body also will be darksome. Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If, then, thy whole body be lightsome, having no part of darkness, the whole shall be lightsome, and as a bright lamp shall enlighten thee.

"As Jesus was speaking, a certain Pharisee prayed him that he would dine with him. Jesus going in, sat down to eat. And the Pharisee began to say, thinking within himself, why Jesus was not washed before dinner. The Lord [*who saw his thoughts*] said to him" and to the others of his sect, several of whom had been invited to this repast: "Now, you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but your inside is full of rapine and iniquity."

Here man is compared to a vase, of which the body is the outside, and the soul is the inside. Now the Pharisees, who were very exact in washing the body, but gave themselves little trouble in purifying the soul, were like unto him who should take pains to clean the outside of a vase, whilst he left the inside full of filth. A servant who did so would be deemed a fool; wherefore the Saviour does not spare them, and, profiting by this occasion, tells them to their faces what they but too well deserved to hear. "Ye fools [*said he to them*], did not he that made that which is without, make also that which is within? But yet [*added he, for he wished merely to humble them, and not to drive them to despair*] that which remaineth give alms; and behold all things are clean unto you (2)."

To neglect alms-giving which is of precept, in order to attach themselves superstitiously to usages which God never prescribed,

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(1) Part I., page 120.

(2) That is to say, your conscience shall be purified: thenceforth all shall be pure before God, who knows no other purity or impurity than that of the conscience. Alms-giving doth not directly and of itself purify it; this purification can only be the effect of penance; but penance is conferred upon alms-giving, which we thus find to be the first cause of the sinner's justification. It is in this sense that we should understand the texts of Scripture which promise to alms-giving the remission of sins. These promises are so formal that we venture to give assurance that, of those who give abundant alms, very few, if any, are reprobates. This, however, is only our own idea.

and which were merely founded on human traditions, was one of the illusions of the Pharisees. Another was, to think themselves just, because they scrupulously observed the smallest precepts, whilst they failed in the fundamental duties of religion and morality; this is what Jesus Christ anathematizes in these words: "Woe to you, Pharisees, because you tithe mint and rue, and every herb, and pass over judgment and the charity of God. Now, these things you ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone (3)." Then he strikes at their pride, and unmasks their hypocrisy: "Woe to you, Pharisees [*said he again*], because you love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and salutations in the market-place (4). Woe to you! because you are as sepulchres that appear not (5), and men that walk over are not aware."

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(3) Here is one of those oracles which comprise more meaning than entire volumes can contain. By regulating the order of duties, he insures the observation of all. To fail in the principal duties, whilst we scrupulously observe the minor ones, if not the effect of a detestable hypocrisy, is at least the grossest of illusions. The contrary illusion which induces us to spurn trifling duties, and only value those which appear important; this illusion, I say, though less glaring, is not the less dangerous; and inasmuch as it is more common, it is found to be still more pernicious. We may fail in slight duties, and we often do fail from surprise, from inattention, or from weakness. But to fail therein from an impression that God does not require them, is to contradict his word. Yet to believe that he does require them, and still to deem them insignificant, is equivalent to regarding himself insignificant. To say that we degrade ourselves by accomplishing them, is elevating ourselves as high as God, or lowering him to our own level; it is at least ranking him below every thing which we respect in the world; for do we blush to render the slightest services to the great ones of the earth? To insult those who do fulfil them is outraging the saints, and in their person Him whom they serve with that perfect fidelity which we make the cause of our unjust contempt. To esteem ourselves more than them, because we do not stop, as it is said, at these trifles, is endeavoring to extract glory from the baseness of our own motives. For to obey God merely upon important occasions, and when, robed in thunder, he threatens disobedience with eternal chastisements, is acting merely from the motive of servile fear. But to obey him when we might disobey him without crime, to execute his will when he appears to entreat rather than to command, is acting from love; for what other motive can sustain obedience, when there is neither paradise to lose nor hell to dread? Yet this is precisely what is termed littleness of mind, whilst the individual with low and grovelling virtues (if even this be not too much to say) is pleased to consider himself enlightened and strong-minded.

(4) Could we believe, if we did not hear it from the mouth of him who is truth itself, that the immoderate desire for distinctions and pre-eminence is sufficient to deserve this dreadful malediction?

(5) Covered sepulchres, concealed vices; whitened sepulchres, vices embellished with the colors of virtue.

Besides the Pharisees, there were several doctors of the law at this entertainment. Jesus had not addressed them; but their morals were so like those of the Pharisees, that they thought they recognized themselves in the picture which the Saviour had drawn of the latter. "One of [*these*] lawyers answering, saith to him: Master, in saying these things, thou reproachest us also." It would have been better for him to say that he had dealt out justice to them. But he was not mistaken in applying to himself and his profession what he had just heard. Here is what Jesus added to it, addressing his speech directly to him. "He said [*to him, therefore*]: Woe to you, lawyers, also, because you load men with burdens which they cannot bear, and you yourselves touch not the packs with one of your fingers (6). Woe to you who build the monuments of the prophets; and your fathers killed them. Truly you bear witness that you consent to the doings of your fathers; for they in deed killed them, and you build their sepulchres."

In reality, the paying of these honors was a recognition that those whom their fathers put to death were truly prophets, and then to put to death those who had the same credentials of prophecy, was furnishing against themselves, by these honors, an unanswerable proof that they were murderers of prophets; for what could they reply to this: Those whom you have massacred were as just as those to whom you have built sepulchres?

If they had not as yet done so, they were going forthwith to do so, as Jesus Christ had foretold; for it is of himself, that is to say, of the Eternal Wisdom, that he speaks when he adds this prediction,

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(6) It is asserted with reason that the saints are severe upon themselves, and indulgent with regard to others. Those who are indulgent to themselves and to others, are good souls, soft characters if you like, and too easy. He who is at the same time severe towards himself and towards others, may indeed be of a harsh character; but inasmuch as he does not spare himself more than he spares others, he thereby evinces that he acts from conviction, and that he has an upright heart. But those who are indulgent towards themselves and severe towards others are necessarily false and wicked persons. They cannot believe that the severity they exercise towards others is an obligation, since they do not exercise it towards themselves, nor that their indulgence of themselves is permissible, since they do not extend it to others. Wherefore, and therein consists their wickedness, their indulgence springs from corruption and their severity from cruelty. And they are both false and hypocritical, inasmuch as they endeavor to persuade the world that they practice towards themselves the severity which they display towards others.

which he again repeats at the approach of his passion: "For this cause also, the wisdom of God said: I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute, that the blood of all the prophets (7) which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, who was slain between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation."

He had yet another reproach to make to these false doctors, and, in their person, to those who, commissioned to show the right road to the people, abuse their confidence in order to lead them astray. He concludes, therefore, thus: "Woe to you, lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge (8); you yourselves have not entered in, and those that were entering in you have hindered.

"As he was saying these things to them, the Pharisees and the lawyers began vehemently to urge him, and to oppress his mouth about many things, lying in wait for him, and seeking to catch something from his mouth, that they might accuse him (9)." It is true that he did not spare them, and we may be surprised that the meek-

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(7) The murder of all the prophets was a national crime, for which God might justly impose all the temporal penalty upon the generation that crowned the enormity by the murder of the greatest number of prophets, and, moreover, by that of the Lord of prophets. We do not so clearly see how the murder of Abel could be imputed to the Jews, Cain never having been numbered amongst that people. It is said that they showed themselves to be his children by imitation, in the same sense that they are called by the Saviour the children of the devil. Whatever weight there may be in this reason, it is certain that, as they imitated him in his crime, they also resembled him in their punishment. Their banishment over all the earth, and the character of reprobation which they carry engraven on their forehead, are such visible features of resemblance, that we cannot doubt but that God, by the chastisement of the fratricide, purposed to exhibit the chastisement which he had in store for the deicides.

(8) The interpretation of the Scriptures, which Scriptures they were commissioned to explain to the people. They were unwilling to recognize in these the Messiah, and also hindered the people from recognizing him therein. Woe to the people who were seduced! but woe a thousand times to the authors of the seduction! Guilty of the seduction of a whole people, they shall bear the penalty of a whole people.

(9) It is not stated whether they then found what they sought. On other occasions they found it either by malicious interpretation of the Saviour's words, or by making him say what he never uttered. He who wishes to find a crime can always contrive to find it in one way or another.

est of men, he who always appeared most indulgent with regard to sinners, should have inveighed against them with so much force, and have treated them so severely. There were several reasons for this conduct; the principal of which is, that these sinners believed themselves just. For inasmuch as they deemed themselves just, they had nothing but contempt and harshness for sinners; and on that account alone they deserved to be treated as they treated others. But, moreover, because they deemed themselves just, they ought not to have been treated in any other manner; and this was the only tone capable of correcting them. Nothing remains to be said to him who acknowledges himself a sinner, and who knows the enormity of his sin; or, if he is spoken to, it is only to present to him the mercy which so lovingly invites him back. But to the sinner who deems himself just, above all, if he make his justice to consist in iniquity itself, it is necessary, no matter at what price, to make known to him the falsehood of his justice, and his grievous sin. We must tear away the bondage wherewith he blindfolds himself. We must sift his perverse heart, pluck out of it the vices which his hypocrisy secretes there, paint them in their natural colors, and set before his very eyes this hideous portrait, so different from that which he had formed to himself. The enterprise is hazardous. We know what it has cost the Saviour and several of his intrepid ministers who have been in this respect imitators of his zeal. But still it is necessary; and, cost what it may, we must venture to unmask these hypocrites, or otherwise despair of their conversion.

Their mischievous doctrine was also what authorized the Saviour to denounce them before the people. The wolf should be made known when he appears under the skin of the sheep or in the shepherd's dress. To fail in this duty from a mistaken scruple, would rather be cruelty with regard to the public than charity towards the particular individual. It was on this account that (*a*) "when great multitudes stood about him, so that they trod one upon the other, he began to say to his disciples: Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hidden that shall not be known; for whatsoever things you have spoken in darkness shall be published in the

(*a*) St. Luke, xii. 1–3.

light, and that which you have spoken in the ear in the chambers shall be preached on the house-tops."

So it is that the *hope of the hypocrite shall perish.* He seeks to dazzle the eyes, and to gain the esteem of men by an outward show of virtue; and a day shall come when his works of iniquity, drawn from the darkness wherein he vainly hoped to bury them, shall deliver him over to the contempt and the execration of all creatures; for these words must be understood in this sense. Elsewhere they signify the shining publicity which was soon to be given to that doctrine which the Saviour then proposed to his disciples in silence and seclusion.

What follows is the repetition of those instructions which he wished his disciples to have more especially present to their minds.

CHAPTER XLI.

INSTRUCTION TO THE DISCIPLES.—GOD ALONE IS TO BE FEARED.—JESUS REFUSES TO BE THE ARBITER BETWEEN TWO BROTHERS.—THE RICH MISER CONDEMNED.—WE ARE NOT TO BE ANXIOUS FOR THE MORROW.—THE GOOD AND BAD SERVANTS.

(*a*) "I SAY to you, my friends, be not afraid of them who kill (1) the body (2), and, after that, have no more that they can do; but I will show you whom you shall fear. Fear ye him who, after he

(*a*) St. Luke, xii. 4–48.

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(1) Not to fear those who have no power except over the body, is on the Saviour's part the advice of a *friend.*

If authority be associated with this power, fear not the power, but fear, that is to say, recognize and respect always, authority, although you should not yield to it when you cannot do so without crime. We mean by authority the right of commanding, and by power the greater strength. See as to the same text, note 10, page 184, of Part I.

(2) We must not fear to lose the life of the body, if we are not to fear those who take away that life. We necessarily fear those who do the evil when we fear the harm which they can do.

For the same reason, we must say: Fear hell; for if this fear were not to exist, Jesus Christ must have here said without any reason: Fear him who can cast into hell.

hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? and not one of them is forgotten before God. Yea, the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. And I say to you: Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God (3). Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but to him who shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven (4). When they shall bring you into the synagogues, and to magistrates and powers, be not solicitous how or what you shall answer; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you must say (5)."

Whilst Jesus was speaking in this manner, "one of the multitude," who thought that no one would dare to resist the authority of so great a prophet, "said to him: Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." The King of kings and the Lord of lords, to whom all power had been given in heaven and on earth, and whom the Father has established sovereign judge of the living and the dead, had other work to do than deciding such questions as these. Such was not the object of his mission, and he wished to teach his ministers not to allow themselves to be too much distracted by affairs of this sort, with which they should only interfere when charity obliges them to do so. Wherefore "he said to him: Man, who hath appointed me judge or divider over you?" This man's right, to judge of it by the way in which he advanced his claim, was legitimate; but his actuating motive was an excessive attachment to the goods of the earth. The Saviour, to whom his disposition could not be unknown, profits by this occasion to instruct him upon these two points, highly suitable to make him feel how worthy of contempt riches are: one is their utter uselessness as to life, which they do not render either longer or happier; the other is the uncertainty of their possession, of which death can deprive us in a moment. This moral applies to all men, and the disciples themselves still required that it should be preached to them also. "Jesus [*therefore addressing his speech to the whole throng assembled*

(3) Part I., p. 184 (4) See note 6, p. 159, of Part I. (5) Part I., p. 182.

there] said to them: Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses. And he spoke a similitude to them, saying: The land of a certain rich man brought forth plenty of fruits, and he thought within himself, saying: What shall I do (6)? because I have no room where to bestow my fruits (7). And he said: This will I do: I will pull down my barns (8), and will build greater; and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods; and I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thy rest, eat, drink, make good cheer (9). But God said to him: Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee (10); and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided (11)? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself (12), and is not rich towards God."

We may say, perhaps, that he might have to live for a long time; and, in this supposition, that what is treated as folly, on account of the unexpected event of his death, might be regarded as a wise foresight. No, even that cannot excuse him, because, in his foresight, there was an excess which rendered it as foolish as it was criminal.

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(6) The steward, whose bad conduct reduced him to indigence, likewise said: *What shall I do?* Excessive opulence and extreme misery express their embarrassment in the same terms.

(7) Because he has too much grain, he has not sufficient barns. Abundance produces a sort of indigence. If he had had less wealth, he would have had fewer wants.

(8) To throw down his barns and construct new ones—what embarrassment and trouble! We only toil in order to become rich: do we enrich ourselves only to toil further?

(9) This language, so usual amongst men, contains nothing which would surprise us, if it were that of an ox, who is only in the world in order to graze and ruminate.

(10) Death deceived him, as still it doth deceive so many other rich men, whom it carries off at the moment when they hope for enjoyment. But if death had not deceived him, he would have deceived himself. Instead of tranquilly enjoying his abundance, he would have made fresh accumulations, and constructed granaries still more spacious. Accumulated treasures have never cured any one of the lust of gain.

(11) Very often they are provided for a prodigal, who is reckoned a fool, whilst the rich man above mentioned is regarded as a wise man. Nevertheless, the folly of the spendthrift might be termed wisdom, when compared with that of the amasser of riches.

(12) Because he amassed for himself, he finds out that he has not amassed for himself: others, not himself, enjoy his treasures. He would have enjoyed them if he had cast them into the bosom of the poor. By keeping all, all is lost: by giving all, all is saved.

It is quite fair to take precautions to a certain extent for a futurity which may or may not occur. But, for the few years of life which remain to us, to amass as if we were to live for centuries—to accumulate harvest on harvest, as if the earth, condemned to eternal sterility, were never to produce any more; but, at the same time that the mind dwells upon a long life, to forget the possibility of death being near—to dream, if we may venture so to speak, that we shall never die, because we have made provision for not dying of hunger—this is the point of view in which this man was a fool, in common with many other rich misers who resemble him. There is, therefore, a measure of foresight, which is not unreasonable, because it is moderate, and which is not criminal when we join to it a much greater confidence in Divine Providence than in all our own exertions. But a much more excellent disposition is, to renounce the precautions against future need, and to repose alone upon the creator and preserver of all things. The apostles were called to this perfection, and they were to form thereto a small number of chosen souls, who have imitated them in this point in every succeeding age, but, above all, during those splendid days of the Church's infancy, when the faithful brought to their feet the price of their inheritance, reserving no other fund to themselves than that of Providence.

This was that sublime morality which the Saviour taught to the world "when he said to his disciples: Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life (13), what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall put on. The life is more than the meat, and the body is more than the raiment." Believe, then, that God, who has given life to the body, will give what is necessary for the preservation of both one and the other. "Consider the ravens: for they sow not; neither do they reap; neither have they store-house nor barn; and God feedeth them. How much are you more valuable than they? And which of you, by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? If, then, ye be not able to do so much as the least thing, why are you solicitous for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they labor not; neither do they spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these.

(13) Part I., pages 137, 138.

Now, if God clothe in this manner the grass that is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, O ye of little faith? Therefore seek not you what you shall eat nor what you shall drink; be not lifted up on high; for all these things do the nations of the world (14) seek, and your Father knoweth that you have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It is, therefore, this eternal kingdom which was henceforward to be the only object of their search. What can they renounce which is equivalent to this? And shall God, who gives them so great a gift, refuse to them a morsel of bread? Such is the indemnity for their sacrifices, and the pledge of their confidence, which the Saviour proposes in these tender words: "Fear not, little flock; for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom. Sell what you possess, and give alms (15). Make to yourselves bags which grow not old; a treasure in heaven which faileth not: where no thief approacheth nor moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

The prodigious wealth of the rich miser had given occasion for the lessons which Jesus Christ had just given to his disciples. His sudden and unforeseen death constitutes the subject of the following moral: "Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands, and you yourselves like to men who wait for their Lord, when he shall return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately (16). Blessed are those servants

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(14) In other words, people of the world, those who are called worldlings, because by forgetting the future, they occupy themselves exclusively with the present. Or, if we wish to construe it as indicating the Gentiles, we may say that this excessive disquietude about the wants of life is a species of paganism: if it be not an utter ignorance of God, it is at least a misconception of his providence.

(15) This was a counsel of perfection. Some believe it to have been a precept enjoined upon the apostles.

(16) The drift of this parable is to show that the day of the Lord, that is to say, the day of death, and of the judgment which follows it, being always uncertain, the only way to avoid being taken by surprise, is to be always prepared for it. Summing up the general sense, the fathers and interpreters explain in divers ways the different parts. According to the majority, the loins girt signify continence. By the lamps in the hands are understood good works and the light of good example. Watching for the master is the desire to see Jesus Christ. The saints sigh for his coming—at least the just do not

whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching! Amen, I say to you, that he will gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and, passing, will minister unto them (17). And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch (18), and find them so, blessed are those servants. But this know ye, that if the householder did know at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Be you, then, also ready; for at what hour you think not, the Son of man will come."

"[*Then*] Peter said to him: Lord, dost thou speak this parable to us, or likewise to all?" The parable was applicable to all, but the inquiry from Peter caused it to apply to him personally, and at the same time to all the pastors of the Church, under the figure of the superintendent who is charged with the entire house. "Who thinkest thou, the Lord said, is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord setteth over his family, to give them their measure of wheat in

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fear it. This is tantamount to that expression of Saint Paul (Titus, ii.): *We should live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

(17) The masters of the earth do not act so. Jesus Christ doth not do so with this parade of servitude which is exhibited here merely to give propriety to the parable; but he does so really, not only by serving personally, but, if we may venture to use the expression, by serving out himself, that is to say, by giving himself entirely to his elect, in order to satiate all the desires of our heart in the possession of him.

(18) As to the division of the night into watches, see note 10, page 193, of Part I. Here the four watches represent the four ages of life. Jesus Christ only speaks expressly of the second and the third, which correspond with youth and manhood, the two ages wherein we think least of death, and are least apprehensive of its approach. He says nothing of infancy, which is incapable of preparation, and where innocence forms a substitute for all care, nor of old age, which cannot be ignorant that death draws near, unless age has utterly lapsed into insanity: in this case it is like second infancy, at least as to preparation, and would to God it resembled it in its innocence.

When a man is attacked by a dangerous illness, we give him notice to regulate his conscience. We do not give him notice when, without sickness, reason begins to fail. The faculty is soon utterly lost, and were an individual to survive it several years, the lot of the soul is not the less decided; it shall be eternally what it was at the moment when delirium set in.

Of all surprises, there is none in which it is so difficult to warn the individual as in the case of him who has no fear for himself; for we may readily say to a sick man that he is very ill; but we cannot venture to tell a man in good health that he has lost his senses.

due season? Blessed is that servant whom when his lord shall come he shall find so doing! Verily, I say to you, he will set him over all that he possesseth. But if that servant shall say in his heart: My lord is long a coming, and shall begin to strike the men-servants and maid-servants, and to eat, and to drink, and be drunk, the lord of that servant will come in the day that he hopeth not, and at the hour that he knoweth not, and shall separate him, and [*although he be only guilty of misconduct*] shall appoint him his portion with [*the servants who are*] unbelievers."

This treatment is as just as it is severe. The chief servant, he who has the ear of his master, knows his wishes better than the others, who only receive their instructions through him; and the abuse of a higher confidence renders the delinquent deserving of higher chastisement. The allusion to the pastors is always very distinct, and we may recognize it in these words by which the Saviour concludes this discourse: "That servant who knew the will of his lord, and prepared *not himself*, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes (19). And unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required; and to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more."

CHAPTER XLII.

NECESSITY OF PENANCE.—THE BARREN FIG-TREE.—THE INFIRM WOMAN CURED ON THE SABBATH-DAY.—SMALL NUMBER OF THE ELECT.—THE PROPHET SHOULD NOT PERISH OUTSIDE OF JERUSALEM.

Taking example from one of the evangelists, we shall place here the following truths, though they have no connection with the preceding subject. We can hardly connect even these together, and it

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(19) The chastisement shall be proportioned to the degree of light and of knowledge. For to know, or not to have known, merely signifies here, as elsewhere, to have had more or less knowledge.

is very probable that they are detached passages which the sacred historians report without marking either time or circumstance; we present them just as the Saviour gave them utterance.

(*a*) "I am come to cast fire on the earth (1), and what will I but that it be kindled? And I have a baptism, wherewith I am to be baptized (2); and how am I straitened until it be accomplished? Think ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you no, but separation (3). For there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided; three against two, and two against three. The father *shall be divided* against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the moth er; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

(*b*) "There were present at that very time some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answering, said to them: Think you that these Galileans were sinners above all the men of Galilee, because they suffered such things? No, I say to you; but unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower fell in Siloë, and slew them: think you that they also were debtors above all the men that dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I say to you; but except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish."

We see that the Jews were not reclaimed from their old prejudice, viz., that the misfortunes of life were always the punishment of crime,

(*a*) St. Luke, xii. 49–53. (*b*) St. Luke, xiii. 1–8.

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(1) Some assert that this fire is that of division. We see in what sense they thus understood it, and this sense is not a wrong one. The majority prefer to explain it with reference to the fire of charity which the Holy Ghost infuses into all hearts. We ought to conform ourselves to this interpretation, not only because it is the most common, but, moreover, because it is that of the Church, which says (Mass of Saturday in *Pentecost-week*): Let us pray, O Lord, that the Holy Ghost would inflame us with *the fire* which the Lord Jesus Christ *brought upon earth, and which he wished to see fully enkindled.*

(2) By this baptism all interpret the passion. Jesus Christ is pressed, not by fear, as some explain it, but by the desire of seeing the passion accomplished. It was to have preceded the descent of the Holy Ghost, which is the divine fire that the Saviour desired so earnestly to see kindled upon earth. This it was which made him desire this baptism with so much ardor. We are thus enabled to connect this text with the preceding.

(3) See note 11, page 185, Part I., chapter xxiii.

and that the most unfortunate were the most guilty. It is true that those just spoken of were guilty; but they were not more so than those who deemed themselves better because a similar disaster had not fallen upon them. The justice of God had exercised its rights over the first class; his patience waited for the second. But this patience had a limited period, after which justice should overtake them as it had already overtaken the other offenders, and engulf them in similar ruin. This is what the Saviour forewarned them of; yet it should not be understood to convey that all those whom he then addressed should perish by the sword or be crushed under ruins. These guilty men thus surprised by death before they had done penance, together with the loss of temporal life, had incurred eternal death, and the same stroke which had separated their soul from their body had hurled them forever into hell. Behold the awful chastisement which Jesus Christ denounces against all who imitate them in their impenitence, and that by which they shall resemble them. But a more comprehensive meaning was concealed under these words, *you shall all likewise perish.* Whilst Jesus Christ appeared to address them only to those who were present, he addressed them to the entire nation, foretelling its approaching ruin, and the tragical death of those millions of men and women who should perish not only by the sword and by the falling of houses, but also by the assemblage of all united scourges, fire, pest, and famine. Woe, inevitably impending over them! if they did not struggle to avert it by a prompt and sincere repentance, as the Saviour gives them to understand by the following words; for, pursuing his discourse, he spoke to them this parable.

"A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and he found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard (4): Behold, for these three years I come

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(4) This dresser of the vineyard gives an idea of an excellent laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. Three years of sterility have not exhausted his patience. The tree is not his own; it belongs to his master: however, he appears to take more interest in its preservation than the master whose property it is. He prays as if he entreated a favor for himself. He promises an increase of his assiduous care, as if he were to blame, and that the sterility of this unhappy tree could be imputed to deficiency of cultivation; in which ne exhibits as much humility as zeal. He obtains the delay which he requests. The

seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down, therefore; why cumbereth it [*uselessly*] the ground? He answering, said to him: Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it; and if happily it bear fruit—but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

We may easily see that Judea is this fig-tree; the three years are those of our Saviour's preaching, which should have made it produce fruit in abundance. This tree, still remaining barren, despite of such excellent cultivation, thenceforth well deserved to be cut down and cast into the fire. It is allowed one year more, viz., the time of the preaching of the apostles. After the expiration of that time the measure shall be completed—the trunk shall be cut asunder, the roots uptorn; and its branches, scattered over the face of the earth, shall announce to all men its crime and its misfortunes.

Such, then, is the literal sense of this parable, which is also applied to the hardened sinner for whom God waits patiently during a number of days which are reckoned. Sometimes, softened by the prayers of his servants, he prolongs this term; but if man doth not profit more from this last delay than he hath profited from the others, then outraged patience is turned into wrath; justice has no check, and the blow which it strikes is the more terrible in proportion to the length of time during which it has been suspended. Thus the conduct of God towards an entire people is the figure of that which he evinces towards a single man, as his treatment of a single man is sometimes the figure of that which he displays with regard to an entire people. Although there may be variations, yet the tenor is always the same; and it is very rational and proper for those who are commissioned to expound to the people the divine Scriptures, to apply to individuals several matters which, in the direct and literal meaning, regard the Jewish or any other nation.

In the mean time, Jesus continued to effect by his preaching and by his miracles the salvation of bodies and of souls. (*a*) "He was

(*a*) St. Luke, xiii. 10–17.

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master who grants it desired it more than he—nay, the master was waiting for it to be asked from him, and he only complains when there is no one to place a barrier between him and the earth, or take part with the guilty to stay his justice.—*Ezech.* xxii. 30.

teaching in their synagogue on the Sabbath, and behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years (5)." We are not aware whether she went there to pray for her cure, or simply to assist at public instruction. However that might be, "whom when Jesus saw [*sensible image of anticipating grace!*] he called her unto him, and said to her: Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity. And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. The ruler of the synagogue being angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the multitude: Six days there are wherein you ought to work. In them, therefore, come, and be healed; and not on the Sabbath-day."

This apparent zeal was the veil wherewith he covered his low jealousy; and the species of delicacy with which he appeared to treat the Saviour, to whom he did not venture to address his speech, originated not so much in the respect which he entertained for him, as in the fear of being confounded by some one of his answers. However, he did not escape this embarrassment, neither he himself nor those of his assistants who held the same notions. Jesus answered them all in the person of him who had addressed to others the personal reproach which he levelled against the Saviour. "Ye hypocrites (6), the Lord answering, said to him: Doth not every one of you on the Sabbath-day loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead them to water? And ought not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo! these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day? And when he said these things, all his

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(5) This spirit was Satan, as the Saviour afterwards said. We see by this that there are infirmities which have no natural cause, and of which the devil is alone the author. We have a further proof of this in Job, whose example proves at the same time, 1st. That the demon may hurt bodies, without its being requisite for sorcerers to interpose, as those seem to believe who assert that the illness of the woman who was bowed together was the effect of sorcery: 2d. That the demon who has this power can only exercise it when God permits him to do so, upon whom God permits, and as long as God permits him to do so. Wherefore God alone is to be dreaded.

(6) The envious individual never saith that he is envious; he fears nothing so much as that it should appear so. However, there must needs be some apparent motive for what envy makes him say and do: religion, equity, nay, even charity, furnish him with all the motives he may want to parade; this constitutes his hypocrisy. A man can be a hypocrite without being envious; but he cannot be envious without being a hypocrite.

adversaries were ashamed; and all the people rejoiced for all the things that were gloriously done by him."

(*a*) [*At that time*] "Jesus went through the cities and towns teaching, and making his journey to Jerusalem. A certain man said to him: Lord, are they few that are saved?" This question may have originated in curiosity. Jesus, who never sought to gratify this feeling, takes occasion therefrom, according to his custom, to edify and instruct. He avoids, therefore, the individual who had just interrogated him, and, addressing himself to those who were listening to him, "he said to them: Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able (7). But when the master of the house shall be gone in, and shall shut to the door, you shall begin to stand without, and knock at the door, saying: Lord, open to us; and he answering, shall say to you: I know you not whence you are. Then you shall begin to say: We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. And he shall say to you: I know you not whence you are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity (8). There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. There shall come from the east and the west, and the north and the south; and shall sit down in the kingdom of

(*a*) St. Luke, xiii. 22–30.

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(7) Into the kingdom of God when consummated, which is heaven. But they cannot do so, because they did not wish to enter into the kingdom when commenced, which is the Church. The difference of one and the other is that between the vestibule and the interior of the palace.

(8) This blot shall not be effaced by the advantage of having lived with Jesus Christ, of having drank and eaten with him; it shall not be effaced by kindred, and if it could be discernible in his mother, it would not be effaced by her maternity. In the eyes of God the works of justice or iniquity decide alone whether favor or disgrace be due. Without regard to persons, or to any thing which the world values or despises, he crowns virtue alone, and reproves only vice. I recognize God by this feature; and one of the most divine characteristics of the Christian religion is, that intrep... tone with which it ventures to say to the masters of the world: If thou dost the works of iniquity, thou shalt be eternally tormented in the depth of the abyss, whilst the lowest of your slaves, if he die in justice, shall reign above the stars.

God. And behold, they are last that shall be first, and they are first that shall be last (9)."

This answer was addressed personally to the Jews. It informs them that the number of those who will be saved shall be very great, since it shall comprise individuals from all parts of the earth; but the number amongst their own nation shall be very small, because what is here termed the narrow gate is for them, the evangelical law, which few of them would embrace. What should render this gate still narrower was the small number even of those who should enter. Hence it followed that those who would not enter should constitute the majority. The latter, more powerful in point of numbers, and more so by their assurance, would turn against the first, and, by their fury in persecuting them, render it more difficult for them to enter that gate, already so hard to gain. But at last the moment should arrive when, although they might desire to enter the heavenly kingdom from which they should have thus excluded themselves, they find it closed against them. Thereupon the weeping and gnashing of teeth, when they shall behold this small number of their brethren, the former objects of their contempt and their hatred, in the company of patriarchs and prophets, enjoying that ineffable happiness, the privation of which is not less bitter than its enjoyment is delightful. But what shall redouble their rage is, to see that there were places for all, and that theirs shall be filled by those who formerly were strangers to the alliance, but who shall have been admitted in the place of the disinherited children. For they were to throng thither from the four corners of the earth; and behold the sense in which Jesus Christ declares that the number of the elect taken by itself shall be very great, although amongst the Jews it should be very small when compared with the bulk of the nation.

You may here inquire, with reference to this subject, whether amongst the faithful themselves the number of the elect shall be the majority or minority? An idle query from the lips of the greater number who moot the question, since each one must be judged ac-

(9) Until then the Jews had been preferred to the Gentiles—the Gentiles shall shortly be preferred to the Jews. These who were the first shall be the last, which does not mean that they shall have the last places in the kingdom of God, but that they shall be utterly excluded from it.

cording to his works, and no one shall be saved barely because there shall be a great number of elect, as no one shall be condemned, precisely because there shall be a great number of reprobates. Wherefore let us not mind others, but let each one think of himself; being persuaded that if he preserve his innocence, or if he recover it by sincere repentance, should but one be saved, that individual shall be himself; but, on the contrary, he shall be reprobate, were there but one reprobate alone, if, after having sinned, he dieth in his impenitence.

(*a*) "The same day there came some of the Pharisees, saying to Jesus: Depart and get thee hence, for Herod hath a mind to kill thee." The intimation was true, although given out of envy, and not from charity. Perhaps it was Herod himself who caused it to be given. It would be difficult to divine the reason for this warning; however, the thing is not improbable, inasmuch as the Saviour conveys back to this prince his reply through the medium of those who came to speak to him. "Go, he said to them, and tell that fox (10): Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am consummated. Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following (11), because it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem (12)."

(*a*) St. Luke, xiii. 31–35.

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(10) Thus styled by Jesus Christ, and perhaps he generally went by the denomination on account of his cunning. Besides being naturally cunning, his situation might further contribute to render him such. He was obliged to please the Romans, by whom alone he held his sway, and he did not wish to displease his subjects, who could not endure the Romans. What cunning must be necessary to reconcile such antagonistic elements, when an individual has not sufficient probity to effect this purpose by righteous conduct —the only means most suitable to secure a successful issue, and the only means by which any one can permanently succeed!

(11) These three days signify the short time which Jesus Christ had to remain upon earth. This answer is full of magnanimity; it is as if he said: I act as I wish: I dread no one, and I shall not die except at the time and in the place which I have myself appointed.

The just man can say with the same intrepidity: I do what God wishes me to do—I fear him alone, and I shall not die except at the time and in the place chosen by him.

(12) That is to say, it is not suitable that a prophet should suffer death out of Jerusalem. The reason given by some is, because the judgment of a prophet was reserved to the great Sanhedrim. Others think that Jesus Christ spoke thus because the majority

His heart is moved when pronouncing the name of this unfortunate city, and he cannot refrain from addressing to it this reproach which compassion draws forth from the depth of his paternal bosom. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee, how often would I have gathered thy children as the bird doth her brood under her wings, and thou wouldst not (13)? Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. And I say to you, that you shall not see me till the time come, when you shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Children pronounced this benediction when he made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. However, this is not what the Saviour had here in view. He intended to go again to Jerusalem for the feast of the dedication before the last journey, when this acclamation was to be uttered; and after it was spoken, he again said to the Jews: "You shall not see me till the time come, when you shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." An evident mark that this first acclamation was not that of which he then spoke. A deeper meaning was concealed beneath these words: they announced the conversion of the Jews, who, reclaimed from their prejudices, should turn at length towards him, and hasten by their ardent invocations the second coming of the Messiah, whom their fathers had rejected. Jesus Christ said that before this period they should see him no more, because he had only a few days further to pass amongst them; after which these wilfully blinded people, who disowned him in person, should obstinately deny him, even until the consummation of ages, notwithstanding the establishment of his Church and the accomplishment of the prophecies, although these signs had been more than sufficient to make him manifest to all the nations of the earth.

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of the prophets who were put to death had been deprived of life at Jerusalem, whence it might very possibly happen, as is also thought, that what Jesus here says had passed into a proverb.

(13) God *would* have it so, and Jerusalem *would not:* what God *would* have, did not come to pass. Wherefore there are, without prejudice to divine omnipotence, wishes of God that have not their accomplishment. Theologians explain this mystery in various ways; but whatever explanation be adopted, Jesus Christ has said it, and we must believe it.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A MAN CURED OF THE DROPSY ON THE SABBATH-DAY.—WE ARE ALWAYS TO TAKE THE LOWEST PLACE.—TO INVITE THE POOR.—PARABLE OF THOSE WHO EXCUSE THEMSELVES FROM COMING TO THE SUPPER.—WE MUST PREFER JESUS CHRIST BEFORE ALL THINGS.

(*a*) "It came to pass, when Jesus went into the house of one of the chief of the Pharisees on the Sabbath-day to eat bread, that they watched him [*for the purpose of criticising his actions*], and behold, there was a man before him that had the dropsy. Jesus answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying: Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day (1)? But they held their peace. He taking him that had the dropsy, healed him, and sent him away. And answering them [*their very thoughts*], he said: Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath-day? And they could not answer him to these things."

Then, after having been observed, Jesus Christ observed them in his turn; and not content with having made them feel that he had nothing to dread from their criticism, he further informed them that they had need of his instructions. "Marking how they that were invited chose the first seats at the table, he spoke a parable, saying to them: When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the first place (2), lest perhaps one more honorable than thou be in-

(*a*) St. Luke, xiv.

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(1) We have seen in note 2, page 112, chapter xv., Part I., that the rabbis were still more scrupulous than the Pharisees upon the observance of the Sabbath. With all that, they do not yet consider that it is kept strictly enough; some of them are even of opinion that it is this desecration which retards the coming of the Messiah, who shall appear directly when the Sabbath shall have been perfectly observed; that, in short, he only awaits this preliminary.

Any practice, however holy it may be in its institution, must always be converted into superstition and fanaticism, when a party would fain reduce all religion to it alone.

(2) The sages of paganism had taught this lesson before Jesus Christ. They were unacquainted with humility, yet they enjoined the semblance of it. Instinct tendered this homage to it, and it was honored nearly in the same way as the unknown God, whose



vited; and he that invited thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place; and then thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art invited, go, and sit down in the lowest place; that when he that invited thee cometh, he may say to thee: Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee. Because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The refinement of our manners gives but little room for the application of this moral, especially in this particular instance. It very rarely occurs amongst us that the least honorable of the company should go and take the first place at table; or, if he ventured to do it, most likely he would be left to endure the shame of remaining there rather than be affronted by being displaced. However, these presuming individuals are sometimes displaced in other circumstances, which generally are those wherein the degrees of rank are regulated, and perhaps this was the case at the feasts of the Jews. Sincere humility should always be the motive inducing us to station ourselves rather below than above the rank which is due to us. To do this with the design of being invited to *go up higher*, would be merely substituting for that coarse pride which seizes upon the first seat, the more refined pride which desires to obtain it through deference. Moreover, we should discard the notion that the latter deportment is that which Jesus Christ prescribed to the Pharisees. Incapable as they were of entertaining sentiments of profound humility, he accommodates himself to their weakness, contenting himself, as a first lesson, with making them remark the humiliating blunders of pride, which really ends in shame by the very course it deemed conducive to glory, whilst glory awaits the humility that shuns it. We daily witness the occurrence of this state of things in the world, when men, imitating on this point the sentiments and the conduct of God, resist the proud man who would fain possess himself by force of their esteem and their respect, which they thrust upon the humble man who declines them. But what men sometimes do in this world is

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altar was observed by Saint Paul at Athens. But must it not be visible that the semblance without the reality is merely hypocrisy, and that if it be incumbent upon us to appear modest, we should consequently be really humble? This reasoning is extremely simple; yet the world has existed four thousand years without drawing the inference.

but a faint image of what God shall do in the other world, where, by an irrevocable decree, the effect of which shall be eternal, he shall perfectly accomplish his own saying: *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* For the instruction which he has just given refers to this fact, and this is what renders the instruction so highly important.

It was addressed directly to the guests, although it applied to all. But it seems that the master of the feast well deserved to have a separate instruction to himself. The Saviour admonishes him to substitute charitable invitations for those which were ostentatious and interested. "And he said to him also that had invited him: When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy neighbors who are rich (3), lest perhaps they also invite thee again, and a recompense be made to thee (4). But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind (5); and thou shalt be blessed, because they have not

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(3) Jesus Christ does not forbid us to invite our friends and our kindred who are rich; the negative particle signifies in this passage, invite *rather* the poor, &c., than those among your kindred who are rich. We do precisely the contrary; for we invite the rich from the fact of their being rich, and we decline inviting the poor from the fact that they are poor.

(4) Supposing that they were invited from this motive. For we may do so from laudable motives, such as are those of observing certain indispensable rules of decorum, of making acknowledgments of friendship or of gratitude, of fostering unanimity amongst families; and God, who approves these motives, will recompense them. Therefore the recompense will be according to the motive; if this be virtuous, the recompense will be received on the day of resurrection; but if we invite for the purpose of being invited in our turn, we shall be invited, and an entertainment shall be the reward of an entertainment. If the motive be to enjoy the honor which may result from the fact of having a grand entertainment, we shall have this honor, and nothing further; if the motive be to be amused by witty guests, perhaps we may have this amusement; and this *perhaps* I also make use of with reference to other recompenses of the sort; for what we do in order to be cherished, admired, amused, sometimes ends in our being envied, mocked, and annoyed.

(5) This is not an injunction to make them eat at his table; it is a counsel which the saints have followed to the letter. Those amongst them who were the greatest in worldly estimation have most distinguished themselves in this way. They deemed themselves honored by eating with those who represented before them the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Several of them were even so impressed with this truth, that, not daring to sit down at the same table with them, they served them on bended knees. These saints were perfectly convinced of what the fathers have called the sacrament of the poor, viz., they recognized Jesus Christ under the poor man's tattered garments, as faith recognizes him under the sacramental species. Behold perfection; but the precept con-

wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just."

"When one of them who sat at table with him had heard these things, he said to him: Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

Undoubtedly he might well say so; but he might have added: Unhappy are those who shall be excluded from this heavenly banquet! and doubly unhappy, inasmuch as they shall be excluded by their own fault alone. For it is not God who has excluded them from this ineffable delight. He had prepared it for them; he had called them by repeated invitations. Fettered by ties of flesh and blood, they have despised his gifts and repulsed his advances. They shall be forever banished from his table, and others shall occupy their places; an awful truth which Jesus Christ had already announced to them, and which he is going to repeat to them again. For, taking occasion from what this man had just said, "he [*in his turn*] said to him: A certain man made a great supper, and invited many. At the hour of supper he sent his servant to them who were invited, that they should come, for now all things are ready. They began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him: I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee, hold me excused. Another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them; I pray thee, hold me excused. I have married a wife, said another, and therefore I cannot come. The servant returning, told these things to his master. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant: Go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the feeble, and the blind and the lame. And the servant said: Lord, it is done

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sists in giving food to those who are hungry; and amongst the number of those who disregard this precept, none shall be more inexcusable than those who give food to that class who do not stand in need of it. For, possessed as they are of the means of regaling the rich, can they assert that they have not wherewith to solace the poor?

Jesus Christ having promised to make us one day sit at his table, hath he not a right to sit at ours in the person of the poor? But the poor man is disgusting—clean him, answers Saint Chrysostom. His clothes are soiled; give him proper clothing. If your delicacy can still hardly endure him, make him eat with your domestics, or else send him what you have not the courage to serve up to him. It is quite absurd to raise difficulties in this matter; the saints find an answer for them all.

as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room (6). The lord said to the servant: Go out into the highways and the hedges, and compel them to come in (7), that my house may be filled; but I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited shall taste of my supper."

Jesus was then on his way to Jerusalem. "There went a great multitude with him, and turning, he said to them: If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple (8)."

It was only to the disciples, properly speaking, viz., to the apostles and the seventy-two, that the Saviour had proposed, at least in part, this truth, the practice of which, so irksome to nature, is, nevertheless, indispensable to any one who professes to belong to him. The proposing it, as he does, to the whole people, is tantamount to making it a general law for all Christians. Wherefore to all it is said that the love of Jesus Christ should have the mastery over all other love without exception, for the word to *hate* only means here this preference. It is due to Jesus Christ, who cannot, without derogating from what he owes to himself, fail to exact it from us; for, since he is God, he should be loved above all things; and were he to permit our love to be wedded to any other thing whatsoever in preference to himself, he would dishonor his own divinity. Wherefore this text, and others of a similar nature, furnish proofs of this, but thence it further follows that Jesus Christ constitutes this prefer-

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(6) True zeal embraces equally the rich and the poor, and it succeeds much oftener with the poor than with the rich. We have an example of the first of these truths in the conduct of this good servant and we have a proof of the second in the different success he meets with.

(7) Entreat them, press them earnestly, be urgent with them; but do not (strictly speaking) employ force. Force is not in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel; the Gospel must be established by persuasion, as the Alcoran is by the sword. These are their distinctive characters, and the distinction must be kept up.

(8) We have already seen that the vocation of the Jews and of the Gentiles to the faith was the direct object of this parable. However, preachers apply it also to the eucharistic banquet to which Jesus Christ invites us in so engaging a manner. This second application seems to harmonize with the intention of the Church, which assigns this Gospel to the Sunday within the octave of the holy sacrament, and has inserted words in the office of the same day, which refer entirely to this sacrament.

ence a first principle, which serves as the basis to all Christianity. Not to prefer Jesus Christ to all things, if an individual content himself with really and in fact refusing him this preference, is to be wanting in sincere Christianity; but if that man go so far as to deny that it is due to him, he is destitute even of speculative Christianity; or if, notwithstanding, he pretend to have this, he is manifestly inconsistent, and falls into palpaple absurdity, as the Saviour gives him clearly to understand by the two following comparisons: "For [*added he*] which of you having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it; lest, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that see it begin to mock him, saying: This man began to build, and was not able to finish? Or what king about to go to make war against another king, doth not first sit down and think whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that with twenty thousand cometh against him? Or else, whilst the other is yet afar off, sending an embassy, he desireth conditions of peace. So likewise every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple," at least in heart and in affection, and with a disposition to renounce it in point of fact, whenever it shall be requisite for my service, "he cannot be my disciple."

CHAPTER XLIV.

FEAST OF THE DEDICATION.—JESUS SPEAKS OF HIS OWN SHEEP.—HE AND HIS FATHER ARE ONE.—THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP AND THE LOST GROAT.—THE PRODIGAL SON.

(*a*) "It was the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem," viz., of the altar formerly profaned by Antiochus, and consecrated anew by Judas Machabeus (*I. Mach.* iv. 59). This solemnity had been fixed for the twenty-fifth day of the month which the Jews called Casleu, which corresponds to our month of December. "It was winter, and

(*a*) St. John, x. 22–33.

Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. The Jews, therefore, came round about him, and said to him: How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly."

He had already conveyed to them this truth so often and so clearly; they were so little solicitous to understand it aright; they were even so resolved not to believe the fact, they who had declared to him that they did not regard as legitimate the testimony which he rendered of himself, that it was easy to see how bad were their motives in putting this question. But the real motive which inspired it was hatred alone, and the desire of ruining him to whom they addressed it. Prejudiced as they all were with the notion of the Messiah's temporal kingdom, the plain declaration that he was the Messiah was tantamount to a hostile declaration against the Roman government; and this single statement *I am he*, became a crime against the State. On the other hand, not to advance it, was authorizing the incredulity of the Jews, which appeared only to await his announcement of himself in order to give in. Here human prudence might have found itself at fault; but he who is the uncreated wisdom experienced no difficulty in rending this spider's web spun by their malice. Whilst he declined saying what they sought to hear, he well knew how to insinuate what they were bound, and yet refused to believe; which he accomplished in a manner so effective, that, in default of reasons, they were reduced to arm themselves with stones: thereupon "Jesus answered them: I speak to you, and you believe not." If the reason is because the testimony of my words appears to you insufficient, "the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me." But the cause of your incredulity is not in me, nor in my silence; your incredulity springs from yourselves and from your own wilful deafness. "You do not believe, because you are not of my sheep (1). My sheep hear my

(1) It may be asked whether those whom Jesus Christ here calls his sheep consist of all the faithful who believe in his word, or whether they are only the elect properly speaking. Saint Augustine takes the expression to be confined to the latter, and the sequel gives much weight to his explanation. Jesus Christ declares that he shall give eternal life to his sheep—that they shall never perish—that no one shall snatch them from his hands: all which declaration, taken to the letter, is applicable to the elect alone. Those who incline to the opinion that the sheep indicate all the faithful, generally ground

voice; I know them, and they follow me." Judge of what I am by the reward which I reserve for their docility. "I give them life everlasting, and they shall not perish forever." The foreknowledge of the efforts which the world and hell shall make to snatch them from him, induces him to add: "No man shall pluck them out of my hand. That which my Father hath given me is greater than all (2), and no one can snatch them out of the hand of my Father. [*Now*] I and the Father are one.

"The Jews then took up stones to stone him." A certain proof that the unity which he here spoke of was understood to be the unity of the divine nature, which he declared to be common to the Fa-

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their idea upon the following reasons. Jesus Christ states to the Jews that they do not believe him, because they are not his sheep; wherefore those who believe are his sheep, conclude these interpreters. The Saviour adds: My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me; all which sayings are applicable to the faithful who are in the state of actual justice, even if they be not predestined. Moreover, is it credible that, amongst these Jews who then were any thing but belonging to the flock, there may not have been some of those who believed subsequently during the preaching of the apostles, and whose faith obtained salvation for them? Here, then, we have some elect, who were not sheep of the flock, and, consequently, there may also have been sheep who were not of the number of the elect. As to what the Saviour further saith, viz., that he shall give eternal life to his sheep, that they shall never perish, and that no one shall snatch them from his hand, &c., this is explained as referring to the light of grace—a life immortal in itself, which no created power shall be ever capable of wresting from the man who possesseth it, and which shall preserve him from death during all eternity, provided, nevertheless, that he doth not voluntarily strip himself thereof. See note 1, chapter xxvi., Part I., page 201.

(2) Literally, *is greater than all.* [*Pere De Ligny translates into French, "est audessus de toutes choses."*] This expression should not be understood with reference to the elect, although they are the greatest and most precious objects in the universe, and this meaning is the first which occurs to the mind. Such a construction would not furnish a reason, wherefore they shall never be wrested from Jesus Christ. What renders it impossible to wrest a thing from the hand is not the value and excellence of the thing, but the force of the hand which holds possession. Jesus Christ, therefore, speaks of the divine nature which, as God, he hath received from his Father from all eternity, by the eternal generation, and received as man in time, by the hypostatic union. In this explanation we are furnished with the reason why no man shall wrest the elect out of the hands of Jesus Christ. For who could wrest them out of the hands of the Almighty? And we have a further proof to the same effect in the following words: *No one can snatch them out of the hand of my Father.* For the Father and Son being but one, and the power (signified by the hand) of the one being substantially the power of the other, it evidently follows that what cannot be wrested from the hand of the Father can neither be wrested from the hand of the Son.

ther and to him, and not that species of moral unity which results from conformity of sentiments and wishes. The Arians would fain have understood this declaration merely in the latter sense. We are surprised that they should have been followed in this construction by some Catholic interpreters, who have preferred rather to copy from such bad authors than adhere to the common explanation, misled by that relish for singularity, which, when carried to excess, produces heresy, and, even when restricted within certain limits, always makes rash and dangerous theologians. To return to the Jews: Jesus wished that they should pronounce flatly and by word of mouth that which was already clearly manifested by the stones they clutched in their hands; and suspending, by his omnipotence, the effects of their fury, of which he did not yet wish to become the victim, "he answered them: Many good works I have showed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him: For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."

(*a*) "When the Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to him [*John the Baptist*], to ask him: Who art thou? He confessed, and did not deny; and he confessed: I am not the Christ." If Jesus Christ was not God, he would have been bound to confess in a more marked manner, if it were possible, and still more explicitly than he, that he was not God, and that they had misunderstood the meaning of his words. But this he does not do, and he leaves this meaning still impressed on the minds of his hearers. For he adds nothing to what he has said, much less does he correct this impression by stating to them, as he is going to do, that the name of God belongs to him in a much more excellent manner than to all those to whom that name is given in Scripture, which statement favors rather than repudiates the interpretation which they had given to his words, and, without saying positively I am God, conveys the wish that they should believe it. What enormous prevarication, if it were not true that he was God! And, lastly, since he does not undeceive the Jews when they believe that he makes himself pass for God, we must admit one of these two consequences, viz., either he possesses divinity, or he wishes to be the usurper thereof. Those who deny

(*a*) St. John, i. 19, 20.

him the possession of this divinity, and who acknowledge at the same time that he was incapable of falsehood, cannot escape from this dilemma. Here, therefore, is what (*a*) "Jesus answered them: Is it not written in your law (3), I said you are gods (4)? If he called them gods to whom the word of God was spoken, and the Scripture cannot be broken, do you say of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."

These latter words recalled those previously spoken, *I and the Father are one*, and appeared with reason to have the same sense. Although they were justified by reasons wholly unanswerable, they yet rekindled the fury which had merely been suspended. Respect for the temple hindered them from glutting their vengeance on the spot which formed part of its precincts. "They sought, therefore, to take Jesus." But whether he rendered himself invisible, or that he struck them motionless, "he escaped out of their hands. And he went again beyond the Jordan, into that place where John was baptizing first, and there he abode." This place was called Bethania, otherwise Bethabara. Jesus knew that his presence, joined to the recollection of the testimony which John had there rendered to him as Son of God, should there effect the salvation of many. In point of fact, as soon as they became aware of his arrival, "many resorted to

(*a*) St. John, x. 34.

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(3) We read these words in the 81st Psalm. The term "Law" was more particularly applicable to the books of Moses; but we see by this example, and by some others, that it was also given to the whole collection of the Old Testament.

(4) God thus denominates the judges, because the power of judging with which they are invested is an emanation from divine authority. The sequel shows that they were bad judges. However, they are not the less on that account called judges; their vices, therefore, are no reason for refusing them the respect and the sort of worship that is due them on account of this title. But it is announced to them that they shall die, and that the God of judges is their judge, in order that they may know that their prevarications shall not be unpunished. The indocility of the people and the iniquity of bad judges have no more potent corrective than these two words, issued from the mouth of the sovereign judge: *You are gods, and you shall die like the rest of men.*

him, and they said: John indeed did no sign (5). But all things whatsoever John said of this man were true. And many believed in him."

As Jesus communicated himself to all with equal bounty, (*a*) "Now the publicans and sinners drew near unto him to hear him." The most perverse of all sinners, and at the same time the most incorrigible, inasmuch as they deemed themselves saints, "the Pharisees and the Scribes, murmured [*at this*], saying: This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." It was easy for the Saviour to repress the pride of these proud censors, and to confound them by a single word, as he had done in the affair of the adulteress. He preferred this time to give them the reason for that compassionate meekness which characterizes true justice, in the same way as false justice is recognized by fierce and disdainful intolerance. Nothing is so tender as the images which he is going to trace of his goodness, and it is hardly conceivable, when we consider them, how men can still be tempted to despair.

"He spoke [*therefore*] to them this parable [*which he proposed in the form of interrogation*]: What man of you that hath an hundred sheep, and that he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders rejoicing; and coming home, call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? I say to you (6), that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one

(*a*) St. Luke, xv. 1–32.

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(5) His mission was sufficiently authorized by his miraculous birth, and by the still more miraculous sanctity of his life. It was further proved by even the miracles of Jesus Christ. These miracles, by proving that Jesus was the Messiah, proved that he who had declared him to be such before the Saviour had commenced to work miracles, was truly a prophet. This is the first reason why God had not conferred upon John the gift of miracles; he could effect his mission without them. We may add, that Jesus Christ wished to reserve to himself this striking characteristic of strength and of power, which evidently marked his superiority over John, and disabused the people of the idea which occasionally recurred to them of mistaking the servant for the Master.

The greatest of mankind never wrought miracles; we are even allowed to believe that Mary, the holiest of creatures, never wrought one during the whole course of her mortal life. Virtue alone, not prodigies, constitutes the saint.

(6) See note 12, chapter xxxii., page 252, Part I.

sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just, who need not penance. Or what woman having ten groats, if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it, call together her friends and neighbors, saying: Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost. So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance."

The second parable comprehends the same meaning as the first, and the same truth is presented under two different images. The reader has not forgotten that the Saviour had already proposed to his disciples that of the good shepherd. If he repeat it here, he does so for the consolation of these poor sinners who came to him with so much confidence, whilst he at the same time instructed those harsh and haughty men whose whole religion consisted in repelling these humble sinners. He adds, whilst repeating it, the circumstance of the joy of the angels of heaven, for whom the day of the conversion of a sinner is more particularly a festal-day and a day of joy. Those here on earth, who are the truly just, should share this joy, and they share it with them in point of fact: those principally whom God deigns to associate with him in the work of his mercy, and many of them can vouch that the moments when they have seen the tears of repentance flowing at their feet, have been the most delightful moments of their life.

But if a good shepherd tenderly loves his sheep—if a poor woman is strongly attached to some pieces of money—the fruit of her labor, the support of her life, and the only treasure which she possesses, you will admit that these affections do not even deserve to bear that name, if we compare them with paternal love, the deepest—if we may venture to use the expression—of all loves; whilst at the same time it is the most tender of all. Such is the love by which Jesus Christ wishes us to estimate his love for the greatest sinners—not such love as exists in ordinary fathers, but such as can hardly be found even in the best and most indulgent. Behold the image which he himself hath traced with his divine hand.

"A certain man had two sons (7). The younger of them said to

(7) The ancients universally believed that the Jews were figured by the eldest of these

his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me; and he divided unto them his substance (8). Not many days after the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country, and there wasted his substance, living riotously (9). After he spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country; he sent him into his farm to feed swine; and he

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two sons, and the Gentiles by the youngest. It has been since asserted that the two brothers represent the just man and the sinner, and this has become the most common interpretation. Saint Jerome, who excludes neither of these two applications, is apparently the interpreter who has reached the true construction. Firstly, the parable is suitable to sinners in general. This conclusion is evident, from the circumstance wherein Jesus Christ proposes it. The Pharisees murmured because he received publicans and other sinners who were still Jews. Thus, by justifying his conduct with regard to them, Jesus Christ has first in view sinners generally, without distinction of Jew or Gentile. But he foresaw the murmurs which should arise amongst the converted Jews when the apostles preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, and admitted them to baptism, and the reply to these murmurings was prepared for them in advance by this parable. Therefore it is suitable to both, as we have just said, notwithstanding certain difficulties, which, according to the different impressions which they have made upon the minds of men, have given rise to the exclusion of one of the two meanings. But it is easy to solve these difficulties, as may be seen by the remarks that we shall make upon the passages which have occasioned them.

(8) The younger son's share could not have been allotted to him without allotting, at the same time, to the elder son his share; but the latter did not take away his share.

(9) The principal object of the parable is to make known the whole extent of the mercy which God exercises towards the sinner who returns to him in the grief and sincerity of his heart. The youngest of these two sons shows by what path man alienates himself from God, and that by which he should return to him. The eldest is to make us aware that, very far from making it a matter of regret, we should rejoice at the good reception which our common father gives to our brethren when they return from their wanderings. All may be reduced to this; and the other personages, as well as the other circumstances, may well be deemed merely accessory. However, interpreters have sought for moral significations contained in them. Here are such as are generally given to them: the dissipation of the paternal estate is the abuse which the sinner makes of the natural and supernatural gifts which he has received from God. Famine and indigence represent that immense vacuum which is formed in a soul created for God alone, which soul is destitute of every thing, even in the midst of abundance, when destitute of God. The master to whom the prodigal gives himself is the devil. To what servitude has he not been reduced by a false freedom, in place of the sweet liberty which is to be found in the servitude of the children of God! The swine are those infamous passions of which he is become the vile slave, and the husks those miserable pleasures to which he has sacrificed all—pleasures which often disappoint his desires, and which are at all times incapable of satisfying them.

would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him. Returning to himself, he said (10): How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger. I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants (11). And rising up, he came to his father. When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him, fell upon his neck and kissed him. Father, the son said to him, I have sinned against heaven (12), and before thee (13); I am not now worthy to be called thy son." He did not finish, whether it was that his father did not give him time, or that he felt, in so sweet an embrace, that he had already obtained more than what he scarcely ventured to ask. This good father, more eager to grant the favor than the son was to obtain it, "said [*immediately*] to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him (14). Put a ring on his hand, and shoes on

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(10) There is no sinner who doth not sigh when he compares the misery of his guilty years with the happiness of those spent in virtue. Wherefore doth he not then add: Let me be happy again!

(11) He said, I will arise, and he arose; I will go, and he went without deliberation and without delay. How many say like him: I will arise, and I will go! One class go at once; the others put off their return. This it is which causes some to be penitent, and some to be impenitent; which causes some who have sinned much to be ranked among the elect, and some to be reprobate who have proposed a thousand times to do penance. *Delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day.*—Eccl. v. 8.

(12) That is to say, 1st, against the God of Heaven. This word by itself has sometimes this signification in the sacred language, and in several other languages; 2d, against the angels and the saints who inhabit heaven. They resent the injury which is perpetrated against God, as good children resent the injury done to their father; and faithful subjects that which is levelled against their king.

(13) What injury, then, had he done to him? He had neither attacked him in his honor, nor in his property, nor in his person. Yet it is obvious to every one that a son who degrades himself, although he does not directly attack his father, offends him, nevertheless, by his bad conduct. It is a surprising fact, that there are men who cannot, as they say, conceive how God, who is not injured by sin, can be so highly offended by it.

The profligate son who says: What harm does that do to my father? is an insolent man, who adds outrage to injury; and the sinner who says: What evil does my sin do to God? is an impious man, who adds iniquity to blasphemy.

(14) Mysterious significations have been also given to all this passage. The precious

his feet. Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it: let us eat and make merry, because this my son was dead, and is come to life again; was lost, and is found: and they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field, and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. Thy brother, he said to him, is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. And he was angry (15), and would not go in.

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robe is baptismal innocence. The ring is the pledge of the return of the Holy Ghost into a heart, whence he had been banished by sin, and into which he had just entered with the plenitude of his gifts and of his graces. The shoes shield the feet against the stones of scandal, and defend them against the bite of the infernal serpent. All interpreters understand by the fatted calf the flesh of Jesus Christ, given to the penitent in sign of perfect reconciliation, and as aliment necessary for the preservation of the spiritual life which has just been mercifully restored to him.

(15) Here are the murmurings of the Jews, which are spoken of in the 11th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. This is what reasonably determined interpreters to apply the parable to both people: this sense, however, does not exclude the other. Just men, animated by a too ardent zeal, may take a sort of scandal from the mercy which God exercises towards the greatest sinners. What might even now-a-days occur must have been more common in the early days of Christianity. The meekness of the Gospel was not then so well known as it has since been. Jesus Christ properly commenced to make it known, and it was no easy matter to assume the spirit thereof at a season when nothing was breathed but the rigor of the ancient law. Hence this lesson which the Saviour gave to the two children of thunder, when they wished to strike with thunderbolts the unfaithful city which had refused to receive him. *You do not know*, he said to them, *to what spirit you belong.* Lastly, this harsh zeal may indeed sometimes be only an imperfection and a venial fault, which does not deprive of justice those who follow its impulses, and the example of the two apostles is proof thereof. But if you object that the just could not be represented by Pharisees, who were as sinful, and more so, than the others, we reply that these sinners deemed themselves just, and that the Saviour addresses them, following up the notion which they entertained concerning themselves: the argument thereupon acquires even greater force as against them; and at the same time the truly just, who would be capable of imitating to a certain extent their harshness, find therein the instruction suitable to them. On the other hand, it may be objected that the converted Jews, who were previously prevaricators on so many points, could not say to God, as the eldest son said to his father, that they never had contravened his orders; and, consequently, that this eldest son could not be the figure of those Jews. But it is sufficient, in order to justify the application, that, comparatively with the Gentiles, they were just upon the main point, which was the knowledge and the adoration of the one true God. Thus the different senses given to the parable are equally applicable to it, and to wish to restrict it to one sense would be, in opposition to at least the presumed intention of Jesus Christ, confining it within narrower bounds than those which it should naturally have.

His father, therefore, coming out, began to entreat him. He answering, said to his father: Behold, for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured his substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. Son, the father said to him, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine (16). But it was fit that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is come to life again; he was lost, and is found (17)."

To a portrait so affecting we shall further add this reflection, viz., that he who could think that the goodness of God is represented here to its full extent, would mistake a faint glimmering for the sun at its meridian, and a dew-drop for the immensity of the waters of the ocean. No created image could approach to it; and Jesus Christ only avails himself of such, in order that what is known to us may enable us to form some idea of what we can neither know nor imagine. However incredible that mercy which is represented under these figures may appear to us, there is none which the Saviour might not have terminated with this expression: The mercy of God is such as I have just described, and infinitely greater. In point of fact, this surprising goodness of the prodigal's father, which affects us, and sometimes softens us even unto tears, only exhibits a part of the goodness of God, and that part the smallest. It is the mercy which receives, but not the grace which prevents: it exhibits God when forgiving the penitent sinner, but not when he seeks the ungrateful sinner. It would be necessary, in order to make this a complete image, and to represent God entirely therein—it would be necessary, I say, that the father should follow his son in his wild career—that he should go and seek him, even in the distant climes whither his dis-

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(16) That is to say, every thing here is at your disposal; and you have no reason to reproach me for not having given to you what I have left you at liberty to take. This grievance, supposing it to be one, could not be imputed by the son to his father. But, when an individual is in ill humor, he always finds out cause for complaint.

(17) The prodigal was dead in the sense of his being lost; and he is resuscitated in the sense of his being found. With reference to the penitent sinner, these two words bear their literal signification. Grace or habitual justice is formally the life of the soul, and its loss is the death thereof.

orderly propensities had caused him to wander—that he should present himself before him in the midst of his debaucheries, or of his miseries, not so much to reproach him as to invite him to return, to offer him his house, his table, and all his goods; to urge him, to conjure him that he would accept them. For such, properly speaking, is the grace which is termed preventive: behold it represented in every feature. But this would be an overdrawn picture of any earthly father; and if the parable were carried to that extent, it would have been inconsistent with probability, and, perhaps, even with propriety. Such goodness belongs alone to the Heavenly Father, and it is worthy of it to signalize itself by such features as are far beyond all the tenderness of nature and of blood.

We must be pardoned for dwelling on a subject so interesting. I shall, therefore, again say, that, verily, we have the image of preventive grace in the two preceding parables of the strayed sheep and the lost groat. We think that we see it drawn to the very life in the painful and earnest search of the woman and of the shepherd. Let us, however, be careful to notice that there is always an essential difference between these faint copies and their divine original. It consists in this: the lost groat and the lost sheep are a real loss to their owners, who, when they seek for them, seek not so much the thing lost as themselves and their own advantage, since the joy of having found it belongs to themselves alone. But in losing us, God has lost nothing. Neither his existence nor his happiness depends upon us. Even his exterior glory, viz., that which results from the manifestation of his divine attributes (that glory which can add nothing to his felicity, and which he well knew how to dispense with during an entire eternity), would have been no less satisfied, had he signalized his justice by the punishment of the guilty, than his clemency, by the pardon which he deigns to offer them. But that he should come the first in advance to meet us—that he should call us with never-ending entreaties—that he should seek us with incredible care and anxiety—that he should stretch forth his hand to us, and throw open to us his paternal bosom—that he should invite us—nay, even that he should conjure us to return thither, and to receive in his arms the pardon of all our crimes, as if we were necessary to him, and that he could not do without us; as if his happiness

depended upon ours, or that our salvation was his own: behold the miracle, or rather the mystery of the goodness of God, which no figure could represent—which no created mind can comprehend—the depth of which, like that of the most impenetrable mysteries, challenges our adoration. We can only believe it by faith; it is above all hope, and it should inflame us with love at the sight of goodness too great to be ever comprehended by our reason, and for which we could never have dared to hope.

CHAPTER XLV.

PARABLE OF THE STEWARD.—TO MAKE FRIENDS FOR OURSELVES BY WEALTH UNJUSTLY ACQUIRED.—THE RICH BAD MAN AND THE POOR GOOD MAN.—FIRST COMING OF THE MESSIAH DEVOID OF LUSTRE.

THE following parable, or rather narrative, is no longer addressed to the Pharisees, but to the disciples. The first, who were within reach of hearing him, and who heard him in point of fact, were those for whom it was most necessary, and who yet profited the least from it. Perhaps this was the reason which influenced the Saviour to direct no further discourse to them, in order that he might not appear to have subjected the divine word to the derision with which they treated it, and, contrary to his own maxim, to have cast pearls before swine. Whatever weight there may be in this reason, which we only give by way of conjecture, (*a*) "Jesus [*continuing to speak*] said also to his disciples: There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods." However, the master, a just and humane man, was unwilling to condemn him, until he should have had proof of his unfaithfulness. "He called him, and said to him: How is it that I hear this of thee? give me an account of thy stewardship; for [*if what they have told me be true*] now thou canst be steward no longer. And the steward [*who was not able to give a good account*] said with-

(*a*) St. Luke, xvi. 1–31.

in himself: What shall I do because my lord taketh away from me the stewardship? To dig I am not able; to beg I am ashamed. I know what I will do, that, when I shall be removed from the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. Therefore, calling together every one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first: How much dost thou owe my lord? A hundred barrels of oil, he said. The steward said to him: Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then he said to another: And how much dost thou owe? who said: A hundred quarters of wheat. Take thy bill, he said to him, and write eighty: and the lord commended the unjust steward, forasmuch as he had done wisely. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation (1) than the children of light (2). And I say to you [*concludes the Saviour, for that was precisely what he had in view*], make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity (3), .

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(1) We cannot conclude that men are constituted in a particular way, because we may have supposed that a certain man may have held a particular line of conduct. The conclusion may be drawn, if it be true that he has held the line of conduct attributed to him. In a word, a fact is only deducible from a fact. Wherefore this is no fiction, but a true narrative.

(2) Prudence consists in the judicious choice of the means whereby we seek to attain a reasonable end. The children of the world excel the children of light in the choice of the means which they employ; the children of light excel with reference to the end which they propose to themselves. Nothing can equal the industry and the activity of the first; but whither do they tend? They are pointed towards acquisitions which death shall take away from them on the morrow, leaving them naked, and abandoned to rottenness and worms. What toil and industry lost! The second labor for infinite and eternal acquisitions; but, less eagerly bent than the first on the object of their labors, they do not equally excel in the choice and the application of the means. We may compare the first to an architect who concentrated all the ingenuity of his art in building castles with cards, which a breath of air would level in an instant; and the second to him who, with moderate talents, occupied himself in constructing, with solid materials, good, habitable dwellings. The latter, though not a great man, would yet be a sensible man: the other, with all his cleverness, would be a fool. In the arts the union of both constitutes the great man, and in morality it constitutes the great saint.

(3) If we possess them unjustly, and that we know those to whom they belong, we are not permitted to give them in alms: we must restore them. If it be impossible to know those to whom restitution should be made, then it is an obligation of justice to restore to the poor; and, in this sense, the order here issued by the Saviour is literally executed. But mammon is here termed "of iniquity," in a more extensive signification. 1st. Because it frequently occurs, even without our knowledge, that we possess riches unjustly according to this expression of Saint Jerome: Every rich man is unjust, or the inheritor of an unjust person. 2d. Inasmuch as they are to their possessors the cause and

that when they shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings (4)."

Thus, what at first sight might appear to be the apology of fraud and of injustice, becomes, by this conclusion, an excellent lesson of charity, which the divine Master further corroborates by the following maxims: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater (5); and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater. If, then, you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon (6), who will trust you in

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the instrument of a thousand iniquities. 3d. And this sense comes nearer to that of the parable, because we are but too prone to deem ourselves the masters and proprietors of them—a qualification which belongs essentially to God alone, who has merely appointed us to be the disburser of them, who has reckoned them out to us, and shall demand a reckoning from us. This latter exposition is taken from Saint Augustine.

(4) The rich are in this world the benefactors of the poor: the poor are in the other world the benefactors of the rich. The first confer bread—the second confer heaven. Ye rich! you shall never obtain it, if they do not confer it upon you. Is it, therefore, enough to say to you: Do good to them? Would it not be more advisable to say: Pay court to them?

(5) This is said in pursuance of the common opinion. A man will not confide a treasure to him whom he has found unfaithful in trifles; he would rather confide it to him who is faithful even in the smallest things. The party so acting may be deceived, nevertheless he acts prudently; and he acts imprudently, supposing even it should turn out that he was not deceived, should he have preferred the first to the second.

(6) Other interpreters construe *deceitful* in opposition to *true*. They understood by the latter the riches of eternity, the only riches which truly deserve this name. The Saviour further says of the first, that they belong to another, in the sense of our merely having a loan of them, and that we are merely the disbursers of them; whereas those of the other life shall be given to us with full property therein, and in perpetuity. They never shall be taken from us, and we shall never be called upon to account for them. This is the explanation given by the interpreters. It has been recently fancied that this was here an exhortation to the disciples alone, to sell their property and distribute the produce of the sale among the poor, and for two reasons. One is, that if it were noticed that they retained that property which has attached to it, like all worldly goods, the general suspicion of injustice, the faithful would not willingly confide to them the alms which they might intend to give out of their legitimate property: this is what they understand by the *iniquum* and the *verum mammona*. The other reason is, that if the disciples keep this property, which may be suspected of belonging to another, inasmuch as the property may lie under the suspicion of having been badly acquired, the faithful would feel repugnance in paying them their legitimate dues for their ministerial functions—that is to say (apparently), tithe and the honorary gifts. And this is the sense in which the later expositors have construed the *alienum* and the *vestrum*. This has appeared very fine, because it is novel. However, nothing is more unreasonable. For, 1st. The apostles,

that which is the true? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is properly your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (7)."

The miser, the most absurd of all men, considers nothing so ridiculous as that which is the noblest quality in man, viz., the contempt of riches. We cannot, therefore, be surprised that these sublime maxims should have been badly received by a portion of the assembled multitude. The Saviour, as we have said, addressed them to the disciples alone. But "the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him."

These were gross hypocrites, whose apparent austerity cloaked an insatiable avarice, as usually happens with men of this character. For avarice, which displays no prominent vices, possesses in an eminent degree all the economical and lucrative virtues with which it is easy to make up a mask of sanctity. Men who only see the surface are often its dupes; but no one could impose upon Him whose eye penetrates to the inmost recesses of hearts, and he knew well how to make them sensible of this by those strong expressions wherewith he opposed their malicious taunts: "You are they, he said to them, who justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts. For that which is high to men is an abomination before God."

They might object to that, and perhaps they did so internally, that those temporal riches, the contempt of which he preached, were the recompense promised by the law to its observers. Jesus knowing their thoughts, or anticipating them, answers: "The law and the prophets were until John. From that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every one useth violence towards it."

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very far from desiring to be answerable for the distribution of alms, released themselves from that office as soon as they could, in doing which they seem to have followed the dictates of the Holy Ghost. 2d. To assign them as a disinterested motive such an interested view as that of securing their restitutions, supposes them to be of very grovelling dispositions, even during the time whilst they were yet imperfect. And what idea must have been formed of Jesus Christ by the person who makes him the proposer of such a motive?

(7) See note 2, page 138, Part I.

That violence consists in mortifying the passions which the law promised to satiate, and of which the Gospel, signified by the kingdom of God, requires the sacrifice. Does the Gospel, therefore, annihilate the law? the Pharisees might further say. No, it perfects it, by offering infinite and eternal treasures, of which the temporal goods promised by the law were merely the shadow and the figure; for such is the meaning of that declaration which the Saviour immediately adds: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fall."

It is true that the goods of this world were the incentive which God held out in order to induce these stubborn and carnal men to observe his holy law. However, he did not wish to leave them in ignorance of the rewards and chastisements of the future life. We see them represented in a thousand passages of Scripture, as the main object for their fear and for their hope; and, in order that this truth might become more impressive, God had been mindful to make, from time to time, exceptions to the general system of the ancient law. It was with this view that he had tried some of the holiest of his servants (such as Tobias was) by the most cruel adversities, whilst the impious were seen passing their days in glory and in opulence. Since it is impossible that a just God should leave virtue without reward, and crime without punishment, it is easy to conclude that it was in the other life that men were to find those fearful penalties and those true joys, of which those of this life could only be a feeble image, and a very imperfect foretaste. But for those earth-bound souls the present was all and the future nothing. Prosperity was called benediction, and adversity malediction. The illusion even went so far as to regard the first as the proof of virtue, and the second as the evidence of crime, and to their eyes the fortunate man was just, and the unfortunate was always guilty. In order, therefore, to reclaim them, from so gross an error, to the important truth which they so strangely misunderstood, Jesus Christ proposes to them the parable of the rich glutton, and of the virtuous poor man, wherein virtue followed by eternal happiness is found associated with the alleged curse of misfortune; whilst, notwithstanding the apparent blessing of temporal prosperity, vice, happy in this world, has for its ultimate lot the fire which is never quenched. Although this

appears to be the main subject, yet it does not prevent us from seeing that the Saviour had another intention, viz., to complete the instruction which he had commenced upon alms-deeds, by exhibiting the merciless rich man buried in the pit of hell. After having shown the heavens opening, in order to receive the beneficent and charitable rich, he continues thus:

(8) "There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him: moreover, the dogs (9) [*less inhuman than their master*] came and licked his sores. It came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom (10). The rich man also died, and he was buried in hell (11).

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(8) The question has been also raised whether this was a parable or a real occurrence: the latter is the prevalent notion. This is founded principally upon the fact of Lazarus being therein named, a fact which does not occur in the parables. If the rich glutton is not named, the reason is because it would be a blot upon his name and upon his family. However, the Saviour might have given him a name as well as Lazarus, if the name of the latter had been a name composed for the purpose of signifying the state wherein he represented him; for Lazarus, in Hebrew, signifies helpless, supposing that it be not an abbreviation of *Eleazar*, which signifies, on the contrary, *the help of God*. Whatever way we view the fact of the rich man not being named, whilst the poor man is named, we see that this is a further reason for believing that the name of the latter is the name of a person who had really existed. Difficulties afterwards ensue. We shall reply to them when they present themselves.

(9) It was they who eat the crumbs that fell from the table. Their condition was better than his. The poor have been heard to express, by bitter complaints, the envy which they entertain towards them. If he who has regaled the rich shall be inexcusable for not having appeased the hunger of the poor, what shall be the excuse of those who might have fed whole families, by the expense they incurred in feeding a pack of animals which only minister to luxury and to pleasure?

(10) The souls of the just are carried to heaven by the angels. The Church believes so. Command, O Lord, it says in the prayer which it recites for the dying, that the holy angels of God meet his soul, and bring her into the city of the heavenly Jerusalem. For the contrary reason, it is thought that the demons carry off to hell the reprobate souls.

(11) A sensual and ostentatious life, especially if it be accompanied with harshness towards the poor, is a life manifestly deserving of damnation: if not more criminal, at least more dangerous than a profligate life. If it has not all the vices of the latter, neither has it the same remorse.

And lifting up his eyes when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue (12); for I am tormented in this flame (13). Son, Abraham said to him, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things (14); but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos, so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, nor from thence come hither. And he said: Then, father, I beseech thee that thou

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(12) Souls separated from bodies have neither tongues nor fingers, neither do they desire water, nor can they give water. Moreover, those who are reprobate have no communication with those who are in the sojourn of beatitude; they would not entertain the notion of soliciting from them a solace which they well know that they never can obtain. These are those difficulties which have made some believe this a parable. Several others believe that the commencement was historical, and that the parable commenced here. However, God might have brought it about—1st. That the rich glutton, at the moment of his entry into hell, had a view—if we prefer we may say that he had a vision—of the bosom of Abraham, and of the delicious repose which Lazarus therein enjoyed. 2d. That, notwithstanding the distance of places, these two souls (that of Abraham and that of the rich glutton) may have been enabled to communicate to each other their thoughts and their desires. 3d. That the soul of the rich man may have felt heat similar to that which would be felt by a man whose body was in the midst of a burning furnace, and that it may have desired a solace similar to what would be procured by a drop of fresh water upon the tip of his tongue. 4th. It is not impossible that the unhappy man may have been ignorant that he could not obtain what he asked, or that, aware of the fact, the violence of pain should have extorted from him this useless prayer. Now, as it is the alleged impossibility of all these matters which made recourse be had to the parable, we may still adhere to the probability of this being a narrative.

(13) This expression has given rise to two opposite errors—one, that the soul is material; the other, that the fire of hell is not eternal. God was sufficiently powerful to cause that a material fire should act upon spiritual souls when they are separated from the bodies, as he is able to cause the same effect when they are still confined within the bodies; because in both these operations it is always matter acting upon mind.

(14) Prosperity in this world, presumption of future unhappiness—I say presumption, and not proof; for here exceptions occur. Wherefore let not the poor thereupon prize too highly their position, and let not the rich despair. It is the rich Abraham who received the predestined soul into his bosom, and many poor burn side by side with the rich sensualist. Charity, or harshness, in the first—patience, or impatience, in the second class, make all the difference between them. However, since the presumption is against the first, and in favor of the second class, it must be the fact, that charity is oftener found to be deficient in the rich than patience in the poor.

wouldst send him to my father's house (for I have five brethren), that he may testify unto them, lest they also come unto this place of torments (15). They have Moses and the prophets, Abraham said to him; let them hear them. But he said: No, father Abraham; but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. But Abraham said to him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead (16)."

We need not remark that the Saviour spoke often of the kingdom of God. The Jews never understood it otherwise than in reference to the temporal kingdom of the Messiah here on earth. This was the object of all their desires, and it was very natural that they should be impatient to know when it was to take place. But that which they longed for was never to come to pass, and that which they did not desire was already come, as Jesus Christ informed them. For, (*a*) "being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (17), neither shall they say, Behold here, or behold there; for lo, the kingdom of God is within you."

(*a*) St. Luke, xvii. 20–22.

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(15) Another reason for assuming that this is a parable. The reprobate in hell have no zeal for the salvation of souls. All that can be inferred from this is, that the man may have spoken from some other motive. Many motives, more or less probable, have been attributed to him; but suppose none could be assigned him, this general reason suffices, viz., that Jesus Christ could not make him utter, even in a parable, such sentiments as it would be impossible for a reprobate to entertain. This would militate against all probability, and be at variance with the primary rule of all parables.

(16) Notwithstanding, the resurrection of Christ has been followed by the faith of the entire world. But a distinction must be made between those who have not as yet sufficient proofs in order to believe, and those who have them. Those who have them not will believe at the sight of a dead person resuscitated, and those who have them, generally speaking, will not believe. Thus, miracles which would convert an idolatrous nation shall not convert an heretical nation, and those which would convert heretics who are such from education and from prejudice, shall not convert Christians who are become infidels from libertinism. Nothing ever satisfies them who do not wish to believe. A dead man raised to life would not convert the sinners whom this narrative did not convert. What could he say more certain or more forceful?

(17) It shall not appear with such dazzling lustre that it would be impossible not to perceive it. Such was, in point of fact, his first coming. It was necessary then to seek out the Messiah in order to find him, and to study him in order to know him. At his second coming he shall be more visible than the sun in the splendor of its meridian. In

Dissatisfied with an answer which did not tell what they wanted to know, and which told too plainly what they wished not to know, the Pharisees ceased to interrogate him. "Jesus [*pursuing his discourse*] said to his disciples: The days will come when you shall desire to see one day of the Son of man; and you shall not see it;" as if he had said to them, I shall soon disappear from your eyes, and my absence shall be exceedingly painful to you; for he foretold them the time when, exhausted with fatigue, exposed without defence to the rage of their enemies, they would in vain desire his sensible presence, which was to them an inexhaustible source of light and consolation. The love which he entertained for them prompted him to speak in this way. But, apprehensive lest the too ardent desire of seeing him again might make them, together with their first disciples, fall into the snares which the false Messiahs would lay to ensnare their faith, he warns them that before his return, which he at the same time foretells, several of those false Messiahs should appear. They appeared, in point of fact, before the ruin of Jerusalem, of which they were as if the forerunners, which circumstance furnished Jesus Christ with an occasion to foretell that downfall with the other signs by which it shall be preceded. From thence, glancing forward to the most remote futurity, he announces the awful signs which shall precede the ruin of the whole world, of which the destruction of Jerusalem was to be merely the figure, mixing up one with the other, and, nevertheless, keeping them so distinct that they cannot be confounded. This instruction, necessary for those who witnessed the first of these two events, and also for those who shall witness the second, is not useless to those who, placed between the two, have neither seen nor shall see one or the other. Assured of the accomplishment of the first, they cannot question the truth of the prophecy which announces the second. But as Jesus Christ speaks still more in detail a short time previous to his death, we shall give in another chapter a more extensive and a more complete picture.

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one he is evident to those who seek him—in the other he shall be evident to those even who do not seek him. Whence it follows that it is meritorious to recognize him in his first coming, and that there shall be no merit in recognizing him when he comes again.

CHAPTER XLVI.

WE MUST PRAY ALWAYS.—THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.—MARRIAGE INDISSOLUBLE.—VIRGINITY PREFERABLE.—LITTLE CHILDREN BLESSED.

On another occasion (*a*) "Jesus spoke also a parable to his disciples, that we ought always to pray (1), and not to faint, saying: There was a judge in a certain city, who feared not God, nor regarded man. And there was a certain widow in that city, and she came to him, saying: Avenge me of my adversary. He would not for a long time. But afterwards he said within himself: Although I fear not God nor regard man, yet, because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her, lest continually coming, she weary me. And the Lord said: Hear what the unjust judge saith." He cannot, iniquitous though he be, resist a persevering prayer. "And will not God revenge his elect who cry to him day and night (2), and will he have patience in their regard? I say to you that he will quickly revenge them (3)."

(*a*) St. Luke, xviii.

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(1) We pray always, when, at the time when we cannot pray, we recall, as well as we can, the thought of God's presence, and that we offer him the action with which we are then occupied. In this way there is no one who cannot always pray, as God exhorts us to do in several passages of Scripture. This, however, is not the sense in which it is here said that we must pray always: what Jesus Christ has directly in view is, to teach us not to be disheartened when God defers hearing us, being persuaded that a persevering prayer shall infallibly be heard. This second sense is clearly determined by the parable.

God seems to postpone, because he does not listen to us at the very time when we desire to be heard. Really, and in point of fact, he does not postpone, because he listens at the time when it is most advantageous for us to be heard. If he communicated his secret to us, we should thank him for his very delays; but he prefers to leave us in ignorance of it, because this ignorance is also the best state for us to be left in.

(2) The just request that God would deliver them from oppression, not by ruining the wicked who oppress them, but by depriving the wicked of the desire or the means of oppressing. Save us, O Lord: do further—save them with us. Such a prayer is truly a Christian prayer.

(3) This life is so short, and that which follows it so long, that it is true to say that God does not delay, when he delays vengeance until the other life. If a thousand years,

But the reason why so few are revenged or delivered from oppression is, that few persevere in prayer, according to this expression: *he who shall have persevered until the end shall be saved.* But whence comes the want of perseverance, if not from the feebleness of faith? We must not, therefore, be surprised that Jesus Christ, when he shall appear in the lustre of his majesty to avenge all his elect, finds so few of them who deserve to experience the effects of his powerful protection. In those days of seduction and apostacy, the true faithful shall be reduced to so small a number, that he who reckoned them beforehand asks with apparent surprise: (4) "But yet the Son of man, when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on the earth?"

Although this was addressed to the disciples, there is every reason to think that Jesus Christ had also other hearers, among whom were to be found several Pharisees. The weakness of the first made it necessary to exhort them to a confidence both lively and persevering. Another lesson was required for the second. The pride of the latter disclosed itself even in the very humblest of all actions, which is prayer. Their prayer was rather a satire upon the rest of mankind than the avowal of their own miseries, and they used it much less for the purpose of praising God than that of praising themselves. These are they who are spoken of when the evangelist said that "to some who trusted in themselves as just, and despised others, Jesus spoke also this parable."

"Two men went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee standing, prayed thus with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men (5), extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I

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compared to eternity, are equivalent to a day, what are ten, fifteen, or twenty years, hours, or minutes?

(4) We have followed the common interpretation, in order to connect these latter words with the preceding. If the connection does not appear sufficiently natural, we may be permitted to deem this one of those detached facts which are sometimes found in the Gospels, without any dependence on what precedes or follows.

(5) A saint has never yet said: Thanks be to God, I am a saint. I have sinned much —I sin much every day; and, if God did not support me with his almighty hand, I would commit enormous crimes: behold what the saints say, and they say the truth.

fast twice in the week (6); I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven, but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner (7). I say to you, this man went down into his house justified, rather than the other. Because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

(*a*) "When Jesus had ended these words, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond the Jordan. The multitudes flock to him, he healed them there, and, as he was accustomed, he taught them. There came to him the Pharisees tempting him." With this design they proposed to him a question which was then much debated: "Is it lawful for a man, they asked him, to put away his wife for every cause?"

(*a*) St. Matthew, xix. 1–6; St. Mark, x. 1–5.

An apostle hath said: *For in many things we all offend:* and what he states of others, he stated also with reference to himself. The saints perceive distinctly the slightest sins which we do not perceive, and which we commit by thousands. They scan them by the opposition which these sins have to the infinite purity of God, known to these saints, and not known to us; and in this point of view these specks of sin appear monsters to them; and they are such in point of fact.

The saints consider nothing in themselves but their faults and their sins—in others, nothing but their virtues and their good works. They conclude from thence that others are better than themselves, or that they are worse than all others—a conclusion which seems as evident to them as is the evidence that virtues are better than faults, and good works than sins.

An attempt was once made to perplex one of these saints, who was an incarnate seraph, by inquiring from him if he could think himself as wicked as a robber notorious all over the country for his murders and his robberies. Yet his humility found out the proper reply: If he had had the graces which I have had, he would be a better man than I am.

If such are the sentiments and the language of the saints, therefore language and sentiments of a contrary character prove the reverse of sanctity. This conclusion is also inferred from the parable.

(6) This language is so natural to man, that it is sometimes found issuing from the mouths of penitents, whose confession is only, like the prayer of the Pharisee, the mere declaration of their own virtues, and the accusation of other people.

(7) This word, coming from the bottom of the heart, can convert in a moment the greatest sinner into a just man; and a thousand millions of sinners, who have had entire years to speak it, are eternally reprobate for not having spoken it. Let him who can, understand this prodigy of stupidity or insanity.

Their manner of putting the question makes it sufficiently evident that they considered themselves authorized to divorce on very slight grounds, and very often without any cause, and out of pure caprice. This liberty, or rather this licentiousness, was precious to men; and by infringing on it, Jesus Christ must needs offend them. On the other hand, he could not approve of it without rendering himself odious to all women. This appears to have been the snare which they laid for him, in addition to the hope which they entertained of detecting him in contradiction to the law of Moses. Jesus availed himself of the opportunity, in order to declare the reformation he was going to institute with regard to marriage; and wishing at the same time to inform them of his motives, "he answering, saith to them [*interrogating them in his turn*]: What did Moses command you? who said: Moses permitted to write a bill of divorce, and to put her away. Jesus answering, said: Because of the hardness of your hearts he wrote you that precept (8). Have ye not read that he who made man from the beginning, made them male and female? and he said (9): For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh (10). Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh (11). What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

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(8) It was, therefore, merely toleration on the part of God. The wickedness of this people had rendered it necessary, in order to obviate a greater amount of evil. God deemed it more proper to allow them to quit their wives and to take others, than to expose them to the temptation, into which they would have but too often fallen, of getting rid of them by the sword or by poison. Some have thought that this toleration was merely of a civil nature, that is to say, that by not decreeing any penalty against those who availed themselves of it, it still left the sin remaining. Several others have thought, with more probability, that divorced parties could conscientiously avail themselves of the right which was conferred by this toleration, provided the grounds were valid, and that it was done in the manner and form prescribed.

(9) It was Adam who spoke it; but he spoke it by the inspiration of God, who revealed to him at that moment the nature of the union which was to exist between the married couple, and of that union which was to unite children and parents, all which things Adam could not then know except by revelation.

(10) This decides plainly the preference due to the wife as to society—assistance and care. We are not unaware, however, that the wife owes the same obligation to her husband

(11) Saint Paul explains this where he says (1 Cor. vi. 16): *Know ye not that he who is joined to a harlot is made one body? For they shall be,* saith he, *two in one flesh.*

In point of fact, if the original intention of God had been that man should have several wives, either at the same time by polygamy, or successively by divorce, he would have created more than one for the first man, as it is thought that he created several females in each species of animals, for the purpose of accelerating their multiplication. But his design was to form the most perfect union imaginable, by making two different persons one and the same heart, one and the same soul, and one and the same flesh. Now this union, or rather this unity, is to be found in marriage, which being the work of God, no earthly being has a right to break, because no one has a right to undo what God has done. God alone, master of his own work, has this right; and he exercised it, when, for reasons worthy of his wisdom, he permitted polygamy and divorce; but these reasons having ceased by the establishment of a more perfect law, the dispensations which they occasioned can no longer exist. All marriages are to become similar to the first which God instituted, in order to serve as a model to others. An indissoluble and perpetual bond shall henceforth unite all couples, whose union shall henceforward end only when they cease to live; and, whilst God shall preserve them upon earth, they shall be so bound one to another, that, although the earth may be full of men and women, they shall be no more to the married pair than if they were, like Adam and Eve, the sole inhabitants of the earth. Thus marriage, reformed according to the original design of the Creator, recovers all the purity of its institution, and the union of our first parents is perfectly represented by those of their descendants. Another resemblance was soon to render the union more sacred, and the rights more inviolable, viz., that which it was to have to the spiritual marriage of Jesus Christ with his Church. But the time was not as yet come to propose this great mystery; and the Saviour contented himself at that time with again insisting upon the indissolubility of marriage, struggling rather against the repugnance than against the reasoning of the Pharisees.

For, surprised at a doctrine so contrary to their prejudices and their passions, (*a*) "Why, then," they say to him, "did Moses com-

(*a*) St. Matthew, xix. 7–9.

mand to give a bill of divorce (12), and to put away?" The commandment applied merely to the act of divorce, and not to the divorce itself. From the manner in which the Pharisees expressed themselves, they appeared to apply it to both. In order to teach them to make this distinction, "Jesus saith to them: Because Moses, by reason of the hardness of your heart, permitted you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be (13) for fornication (14), and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery."

The disciples did not wish to interrupt their Master whilst he was engaged with the Pharisees; yet they doubted whether such morality, which appeared to them so severe, should be taken to the very letter. In order to have on this point the explanation which they

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(12) The reader has the form of this act at note 7, page 125, Part I.

(13) The exception of the case of adultery excuses the dismissal of the wife, and not the subsequent marriage. The case stands as if it read thus: Whoever shall dismiss his wife—whom it is not allowable to dismiss except in case of adultery—and shall marry another, shall be an adulterer. The Church has always so understood it, and Jesus Christ even gives us sufficiently to understand this, when, in the repetition which he makes to his disciples, he says absolutely, and without excepting any case: Whoever, having dismissed his first wife, shall marry a second, becomes an adulterer.

However, the pretended reformers hold that the exception in case of adultery should extend to the consequence as well as to the crime; and that this case, which justifies divorce, justifies equally the marriage with another woman. Let them speak sincerely. Marriage, such as it was re-established by Jesus Christ, was not relished by them. They wished to substitute for it the Jewish marriage condemned by Jesus Christ. For had they submitted in this point to the authority of his word, they would not have allowed another wife except in the case of adultery, since it is evident that Jesus Christ, every time he treats this subject, either excepts this case only, or excepts none. But we know that they have added those of long absence, obstinate separation, and others, which would multiply to an amazing degree amongst them these second marriages, if they sought to avail themselves of the freedom which this new Gospel gives them. But it is due to them in justice to state, that this legislation allows them much more liberty than they usually allow themselves; and it is well that this legislation has not added to the Jewish divorce Mahometan polygamy, approved, at least tolerated in the person of the Landgrave of Hesse by Luther, and those who, with him, were the chief leaders of the Reformation.

(14) As to the other causes of separation, and their difference from that of adultery, see note 8, page 125, Part I.

desired, (*a*) when he was "in the house again his disciples asked him concerning the same thing."

Jesus gave no explanation of what he had said, but merely a repetition thereof. (*b*) "Whosoever, he saith to them, shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. His disciples say unto him: If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry."

This answer included a profound meaning, which they themselves did not as yet comprehend, wherefore "Jesus said to them: All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given" from on high; and, in order to give them the first lesson on this subject, he added: "For there are eunuchs who were born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made so by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven (15). He that can take, let him take it."

(*a*) St. Mark, x. 10–12. (*b*) St. Matthew, xix. 10–17.

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(15) In order to secure it for themselves, and to merit therein a richer crown. They make themselves eunuchs, not by attempting against their own persons what the Church has always condemned, but by resolution, or, what is better, by vow made to God of living in perpetual virginity. It is a matter of faith that this state is more perfect than that of marriage. Protestants have repudiated it with the utmost vehemence. There is nothing surprising in this on the part of those who have approved of divorce, and permitted polygamy. Moreover, we are not ignorant of the fact, that their leaders were for the most part priests and men bound by religious vows, and who, being tired of celibacy, would fain not be suspected of having rather embraced the Reformation from the desire of marriage, than marriage from the spirit of reform.

After these reformers appeared the theorists, advocating population. If we had leisure to treat the subject at some length, we should not want reasons to refute them. We are satisfied in opposing to them the following reason, which is calculated to make an impression upon them, viz., the Christian religion is of all others the most favorable to population. Here is the proof of this fact, drawn from its principles and its morality:

1st. Except wherein parties are legitimately married, every thing is criminal where purity is concerned. How many persons who have, at the same time, both excitable passions and a timid conscience, are, as it were, forced into marriage by this inflexible severity! 2d. Every thing is criminal, even in marriage, that is beside the end of marriage, viz., the generation of children. How many married couples, already burdened with offspring, would give themselves licentious freedom, if the curb of religion did not restrain them! 3d. It is criminal in married persons to refuse each other, unless the refusal be founded upon a grave reason. How many obstinate refusals and concealed divorces

Whilst the Saviour was treating such grave questions, (*a*) "there were little children presented to him, that he should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples [*who thought he might be troubled by them*] rebuked them that brought them. Whom, when Jesus saw, he was much displeased, and calling [*the children*] together, said: Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not (16); for the kingdom of heaven is for such. Amen I say to you: Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it; and embracing them, when he had imposed hands upon them, he blessed them, and [*after having given this proof of his goodness*] he departed from thence."

(*a*) St. Matthew, xix. 13–15; St. Luke, xviii. 16, 17; St. Mark, x. 16.

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would be produced by certain apprehensions which it is no longer lawful to regard, by disgusts, antipathies, resentments, &c., if religion did not enforce, by the most terrible menaces, what has been justly termed a right on one part, and a duty on the other! And if at present one were willing to take the trouble of calculating, it would be easy to show that in all these ways religion gives more to the species than it takes away by ecclesiastical and religious celibacy. You will say that all these advantages are to be found in Protestantism, which has not the unavailable class of celibacy; but besides that we must take religion as God has made it, and not such as man may accommodate to his own views, we may further reply that the causes which we have just advanced only operate by means of confession, which Protestants have abandoned. This is only thoroughly known to those whom their ministry brings within reach of the secrets of consciences. But there is no doubt that, from the knowledge thus in their possession, they have formed the opinion which we have just maintained; and unquestionably their notion on this point is, without contradiction, the most probable.

(16) We hinder them when we put off indefinitely the first communion of children. The Master of the feast cries out in vain that these innocent souls must be allowed to approach. A harsh and austere zeal is obstinately bent on driving them away. We know that the respect due to this sovereign Master has induced the Church to abolish the custom of giving communion to children immediately after baptism; but if the Church no longer wishes the age of reason to be anticipated, much less does it wish that we should allow reason to be anticipated by the age of the passions. And how often has it occurred that the passions, always so strong at this age, when reason is so weak, not being restrained by the powerful check which the Eucharist opposes to them, have caused the most fearful ravages, and given rise to those first wanderings from which the soul returns with such difficulty, and so late!

If this reason does not suffice, and if we wish to know what are upon this point the intentions of the Saviour, we have no fear in saying that he will always be better pleased to have greater innocence with a little levity, than greater composure of mind with corruption already commenced. We should, therefore, rather incur the risk of the first than of the second.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE YOUNG MAN CALLED TO PERFECTION.—SALVATION DIFFICULT TO THE RICH.—ALL MUST BE RELINQUISHED TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST.—PROMISES ATTACHED TO THIS RENUNCIATION.—THE PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD.

(*a*) "WHEN he was gone forth into the way, a certain ruler running up, and kneeling before him, Good Master, he said to him, what shall I do that I may receive life everlasting? Jesus said to him: Why askest thou me concerning good, and why dost thou call me good (1)? None is good but God alone (2). But [*added the Saviour*] if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Which? he said to him," thinking, perhaps, that the new teacher would introduce some new commandments. "And Jesus said: Thou knowest the commandments: Thou shalt do no murder (3); thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; do no fraud; honor thy father and thy mother; and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith to him: All these have I kept from my youth; what is yet

(*a*) St. Mark, x. 17–27; St. Luke, xviii. 18–24; St. Matthew, xix. 16–25.

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(1) (This might as well be thus translated: *Why askest thou me, calling me good?* Then Saint Matthew would only make the Saviour say what Saint Mark and Saint Luke represent him as saying, which is not unlikely, nor neither is it improbable that he made use of both these expressions.)

(2) He informs him that God alone is essentially good, and that nothing is good apart from God except by the communication of his goodness. The Arians have grossly abused this text, forsooth because Jesus Christ seems here to reprove the young man for attributing to him a quality which belongs properly to God alone. The Fathers refuted them by this very simple reply: This young man is not aware that Jesus Christ is God, and Jesus Christ speaks to him in the certainty of his ignorance.

(3) The second class of precepts is alone spoken of, viz., the precepts which regulate our duties towards our neighbor. That does not mean to assert that there exist no other precepts, or that the others are of little importance; but if we observe these, we shall observe all the others. Taken by themselves, they do not constitute the entire law; but their accomplishment is presumptive proof of the accomplishment of the whole, according to this expression of Saint Paul (Rom. xiii.): *He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.*

wanting to me? Which, when Jesus had heard, looking on him, he loved him," because of this virtuous desire to add to the good which he had hitherto done; and, in order to confer upon him the most valuable of all proofs, "he said to him: Yet one thing is wanting to thee. If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor (4), and thou shalt have treasure in heaven (5); and [*then*] come, follow me."

He called him to evangelical perfection. Inestimable favor! which, on the part of God, is the effect of marked predilection. It is usually at that age that God confers this favor, and he usually confers it on those who, like this young man, have passed their first years in innocence: happy those who know how to profit by it! Whatever it may cost them, they may say that they have purchased at a low rate a rich treasure. But all have not the courage to effect this; and the individual here referred to has but too many imitators of his cowardice. "When the young man had heard this word [*of the Saviour*], being struck sad, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. Jesus seeing him become sorrowful, and looking

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(4) Calvin, who deemed the state of marriage better than that of virginity, also asserted that it is better to retain property, and subtract from its income the alms which may be distributed, than to sell all at once, and immediately distribute the price to the poor. Other heretics have foundered on the opposite rock: for the Eustatheans, who were condemned in the Council of Gangres, alleged that married people could not be saved; and some Pelagians were to be found who advanced that there was no salvation for those who retained the use of their possessions. We have already remarked, that Catholic truth is usually to be found between two opposite errors, like Jesus Christ crucified between two robbers, according to the expression of Tertullian. Many Catholics entertain Calvin's notion regarding the counsel of selling all without exception, in order to give the price to the poor. We have even heard them declaim more outrageously against this counsel than against that of virginity. It is no difficult matter to divine the reason: they inherit property from those who make a vow of virginity, and they lose the succession which they expected to enjoy from those who strip themselves of all in favor of the poor. That those who see themselves thereby frustrated in their hopes should be grieved, does not surprise us, and we pardon their imperfection. But if they dare to assert that these disinterested persons commit a wrongful act, a great sin, an enormous injustice, they place themselves in direct opposition to Jesus Christ; they entertain and they express heretical notions.

(5) The observance of the precepts shall be rewarded; that of the counsels shall receive a recompense incomparably higher. The observers of the first shall receive the *pence:* a *treasure* is promised to the observers of the second.

round about, saith to his disciples: How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God (6)! Amen, I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. The disciples were astonished at his words; but Jesus again answering, saith to them: Children, how hard is it (7) for them that trust in riches (8) to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle (9), than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. The disciples [*as we have said*] wondered the more when they had heard this, saying among themselves: Who, then, can be saved? Jesus looking on them, saith: With men it is impossible; but not with God; for all things are possible with God (10)."

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(6) This having been said on the occasion of the young man's refusal to follow the counsel of Jesus Christ, it might occur to us that this counsel was obligatory, under pain of being excluded from the kingdom of God, and thereupon that it was no counsel, but a precept. It is hardly to be doubted but that such was one of the arguments of these Pelagians to whom we have just been alluding. However, the different manner in which precepts and counsels are proposed, proves evidently that this was merely a counsel. When precepts are in question, Jesus Christ says: If thou wilt *enter into life*, keep the commandments; whereas he says here: If thou wilt *be perfect*, go sell, &c., &c. This marks the difference between perfection and duty, which is tantamount to that of counsel and of precept. Wherefore the attachment of the young man to his great wealth furnished only an occasion to the Saviour for declaring how hard it was for the rich to obtain salvation. Perhaps he also foresaw that he should have been saved by laying aside his riches, or lost by the abuse he would make of them; but their possession then should be the occasion, and not the cause of his loss, and in this sense it is true to say that, whilst he incurred reproof for not having followed the counsel of the Saviour, he has not, nevertheless, sinned by not following it. The whole bears upon this evident maxim: a counsel by itself is not obligatory; and if it were obligatory, it would no longer be a counsel, but a precept. *The virgin who married hath not sinned*, saith Saint Paul, which is true even with reference to her who should have deemed herself called to a state of virginity, inasmuch as the call to this state was merely a counsel on the part of God.

(7) Jesus Christ saith with a sort of surprise, *shall hardly!* He saith with an oath: *Amen, I say to you.* He saith it even three times. O rich! if this thunder doth not awaken you, you do not sleep, you are dead.

(8) To place confidence in riches is to expect from them all one's happiness; it is, therefore, to treasure them in our heart in the place of God, who alone can render us happy. Behold, therefore, why it is that covetousness is termed by Saint Paul *a serving of idols* (Ephes. v. 5).

(9) A hyperbolical fashion of speech, which had passed into a proverb with the Jews: it is also to be found in the Talmudists.

(10) Ask how the universe could be drawn forth from nothing, and how it is possible that a rich man can be saved—the answer is the same: *God is all-powerful.*

But whilst the disciples were engrossed by the startling information contained in the latter words of the Saviour, Peter did not forget that it contained something advantageous to himself. He was one of those voluntary poor who had left all in order to follow Jesus Christ, and to whom the Saviour had made such magnificent promises. He desired to know, then, in what the promised recompense was likely to consist. (*a*) "Then Peter answering, said to him [*speaking also for his brethren*]: Behold, we have left all things (11) and followed thee; what, therefore, shall we have? Jesus answering, said to them: Amen, I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration (12), when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (13). And every one that hath left house,

(*a*) St. Matthew, xix. 27–29; St. Mark, x. 29–31.

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(11) Those who would depreciate the sacrifice of the apostles, saying that they merely quitted a bark and nets, would be ignorant that, in order to quit *all* without any exception, requires an incredible effort, and merits an inestimable recompense. The monarch who should renounce all the kingdoms of the world, and should still remain attached to any thing whatsoever, were it a thing of as little value as the net of Saint Peter, would make a sacrifice incomparably, we might say infinitely, less painful to nature than that of a man who, being owner of this net alone, sacrifices it without reserving to himself even the slightest attachment. Nothing can fill the heart of man; but a mere nothing is sufficient to fix his affection. Now, to disengage one's self from this trifle, in order to cling to God alone—in order to repose solely in God—to have no other good—no other hope—no other support than God—who is the individual who can do this? Let him be shown to us, and we shall not refuse him his meed of praise; for he has wrought a greater miracle than if he had raised up the dead.

The widow who gave the two pence gave more than the rich, because she gave all.

The sacrifice of a moderate fortune is *really* greater than that of a greater fortune, because an individual sacrifices more contentment and repose.

(12) In the resurrection which shall be like a second generation, by which men shall be born again to an immortal life.

(13) Jesus Christ says so with the tacit condition that they shall persevere in the state of perfection which they had embraced. For Judas was to exclude himself by his treachery, so that, amongst those present, only eleven were to sit upon these sublime thrones. On the other hand, Saint Matthias was to be chosen in the place of Judas; Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas were to be admitted to the apostolical college, thereby increasing to fourteen the number of the assistant judges. We must take it that Jesus Christ speaks to the apostles according to the number of those to whom he addressed his speech, and that his mode of speaking is tantamount to this: Each of you (if he be faithful to his engagements) shall be seated upon a throne whence he shall

or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife (14), or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, now in this present time (15), in houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands (16), with persecu-

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judge, &c., &c. The number twelve should not, therefore, be taken literally. It comprises universally those who shall judge with Jesus Christ, in the same way as the multitude of those who shall be judged is expressed by the twelve tribes of Israel. *Know you not that we shall judge angels?* says Saint Paul, which proves that the Jews are not the only people who shall be judged by the apostles. Lastly, when it is said that they shall judge, this judicial prerogative is not merely deducible from the comparison which shall originate between them and the reprobates (this comparison would not be more peculiar to them than to the Queen of Saba and the Ninevites), nor simply from the approbation with which they shall hail the judgment of Jesus Christ. All the just shall applaud his judgment with unanimous acclamation. So great a promise announces something more; and what can this be, if it be not that, seated with Jesus Christ, they shall pronounce judgment with him, and in the same way?

(14) We have seen that Jesus Christ only permits divorce in the case of adultery. Nevertheless, an individual may leave his wife on account of Jesus Christ in several ways. 1st. By not marrying, and then leaving, signifies not to take one. 2d. By leaving a married bride before the consummation of the marriage. Such was the case of Saint Alexis. It is always allowable to imitate him, provided this be done with the view of embracing the religious state. The marriage which has been celebrated, although not consummated, is dissolved by the profession, which restores back to the party who has been relinquished the right of again contracting. If any one dares to deny this, the Council of Trent casts its anathema upon him. 3d. By leaving her, in point of fact, when an individual, from being an infidel, changes to be a Christian—I say leaving her, when the wife, remaining an infidel, might prove an obstacle to the profession of Christianity, or to the accomplishment of the duties which it proposes. This case frequently arose in the primitive times, and it is still to be met amongst infidels who become converted to the faith. 4th. By abstaining, both parties consenting, from the use of marriage, and living together like brother and sister. The first centuries of Christianity furnish us examples in thousands. Our century but little resembles them in this point, and would to God there were no other features of dissimilarity. 5th. It may be said that an individual leaves his wife for Jesus Christ and the Gospel, when he refuses to yield to her criminal wishes, and that he is disposed to endure her humors, her transports of passion, and, if necessary, her withdrawal and her separation, rather than prevaricate out of complacency. Too many husbands, since Adam, have been put to this trial, and have sustained it no better than he did.

(15) It does not appear that the thrones and the right of judging is promised to this class, although several interpreters are of this opinion. This second promise only announces, besides eternal life, the hundred-fold of this life, proportioned to the extent and the perfection of the sacrifices.

(16) Since we see not that this hundred-fold refers to mothers, brethren, sisters, houses, or inheritance, interpreters have perplexed themselves in order to find it out. Those who advocate the millennium seem to be less embarrassed about the matter. The

tions (17), and, in the world to come, life everlasting. But [*adds the Saviour*] many that are first shall be last, and the last first."

It is not difficult to understand in what sense this is applicable to the preceding part of the discourse. The apostles, dazzled by the glory which was promised to them, might find it difficult to believe that poor sinners like them should one day be the judges of all men, without distinction of rich or poor, of monarch or subject. Jesus Christ confirmed them in this faith, by informing them that the order established in this world should be subverted in the other, or rather that to the disorder of this there should succeed perfect and eternal order. Here birth and fortune alone constitute the great and the little; there ranks shall be regulated by merit alone: the lowest of men, if he has been the most virtuous, shall be the first; and the first, if he has been the most vicious, shall be the last. We

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saints, say they, shall reign one thousand years upon the earth with Jesus Christ, and then they shall have the hundred-fold in nature. Thus did they press this text into their service, in order to support their error. But is it, then, credible that they should have one hundred wives for one which they might have left? inquired Saint Jerome of these visionary men. Other ascetics understood the text with reference to the large number of brethren, of sisters, of houses and possessions, which those acquire who embrace the religious state, wherein there exists community of property. This is a pious illusion. For, admitting that these brethren or these sisters are more praiseworthy at least than those whom we may have left in the world, it must also be allowed that this wealth of houses and of lands is not worth a comfortable house and a good inheritance, which one might possess in his own personal right. This hundred-fold is, therefore, contentment, which is of such a nature, that it surpasses that arising from having a hundred mothers, a hundred brethren, a hundred sisters, a hundred houses, and a hundred patrimonies. Jesus Christ is a substitute for all, or rather he replaces them with an immense addition. If any one, said he, doth the will of my Father, he shall be my mother, my brother, and my sister. He is to us all that he has said we shall be to him. Am I not better to you, I alone, than ten children, said Elcana to the virtuous Anna? This is nearly the same language which the Saviour addresses to the soul which has relinquished all for him; and the union which he contracts with her is so intimate and so delicious, that all the connections of flesh and blood are comparatively but misery and affliction. We are so assured by those who experience it, and they alone can give testimony of the fact.

(17) Persecutions are to this contentment what water is when cast upon a blazing furnace. For the moment, it abates the flame; but it afterwards renders it more brisk and more durable. I am filled with joy in the midst of my tribulations, said Saint Paul. He was no longer apprehensive of losing this joy, since he had experienced that persecution itself could not deprive him of it, and this assurance gave the finishing stroke to his happiness.

must not, therefore, be any longer astonished that the highest seats therein should be occupied by the poor, whilst the majority of the rich and the great, cast down at their feet, shall grovel in the dust. Perhaps Jesus Christ was also desirous to give his disciples to understand that what was promised was not yet secured to them; that they might still lose those thrones which were prepared for them; and that, if they drew this misfortune upon themselves, they should one day groan in despair at seeing them filled by others who, substituted in their stead, would be more faithful to the grace which called them to these thrones. This sense, which comprises the great mystery of the transfer and substitution of grace, was so literally accomplished in Judas, that it is not at all unlikely that the Saviour may have had him in view when he uttered this sentence. But these same words which formed the conclusion of the preceding discourse, served, at the same time, as an introduction to the following parable, wherein they express the perfect independence of God in the distribution of his graces. It was, therefore, immediately after having spoken them that Jesus Christ continued thus:

(*a*) "The kingdom of God is like to a householder (18), who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. Having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard (19). And going out about the third hour (20), he saw others standing in the market-place idle, and he said to them: Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just, and they went their way. And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xx. 1–16.

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(18) The kingdom of God is not like unto a man. This fashion of speech signifies that God, in the administration of his kingdom, which is his Church, demeans himself nearly like a father of a family, who, &c., &c. This remark has already been made elsewhere.

(19) This penny might weigh the eighth part of an ounce, and be worth about fifteen sous of our money. It was the price of a day's work.

(20) Towards nine o'clock in the morning. The Jews reckoned twelve hours in the day, from the rising till the setting of the sun. These hours were unequal, according to the inequality of the days. They also divided the day into four parts, each of which comprised three hours.

eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and he saith to them: Why stand you here all the day idle? They say to him: Because no man hath hired us. He saith to them: Go you also into my vineyard. And, when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the laborers, and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When, therefore, they were come that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny (21). But when the first also came, they thought that they should receive more; and they also received every man a penny, and receiving it, they murmured against the master of the house, saying: These last have worked *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us, that have borne the burden of the day and the heats. But he answering, said to one of them: Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for one penny? Take what is thine (22), and go thy way; I will also give to

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(21) The last come were, therefore, the first paid. In the parable this circumstance was necessary, in order that the others might see that these received the same payment as themselves. For if the first had been paid at the outset, they would have withdrawn immediately, and could not have witnessed what took place after their departure. Since they do not murmur at the payment being first made to the other class, it would seem that this species of priority should not be regarded as a favor. What matter to them, in point of fact, to be paid a few minutes sooner or later? I say that this species of priority should not be regarded as a favor, merely considering the letter of the parable; but not so with reference to the application. For the object here is to establish this truth, that the last shall be the first, and the first shall be last. There must be some real advantage accruing to the last which is not enjoyed by the first. This advantage is to be found in the predilection which God has signally shown towards the Gentiles, who became, to the exclusion of the Jews, the chosen and cherished people, and further exhibited in the extraordinary caresses which he lavishes on sinners who, although tardily, return sincerely to him. Now, these are the two applications which are made of this parable, as shall be seen when continuing the perusal of the text.

(22) By virtue of the agreement. As soon as they had completed their engagement, the penny was due to them in justice. However, it was also gratuitous, for the householder might not have entered into any engagement with them; he might employ them or pass them by at his own option. On the other hand, having promised some wages to those whom he had called at a late hour, he was also indebted to them for it in point of justice. Thus justice in the first class does not exclude grace, and grace in the second class does not exclude justice. This is the doctrine of Saint Paul, who states of himself: *By the grace of God I am what I am,* which does not hinder him from stating elsewhere: *There is laid up for me a crown of justice.* Catholic faith has always recog-

this last even as to thee. Or, is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good? So shall the last be first, and the first last; for many are called, but few chosen (23)."

We can, therefore, return to God at any period of life, and that merciful God is still sufficiently liberal to grant to those who give themselves to him in the decline of their life the same recompense as to those who have commenced serving him in the vigor of life, or even from their earliest youth. It is, I say, the same reward, and in substance identical, although unequal in its degrees, in proportion to the time which the individual shall have spent in his service; although it may also happen, and the parable conveys this idea plainly enough, that those who have commenced late do equal by their fervor, or even surpass many of those who shall have toiled from the morning of their life. Such are the consoling truths which Jesus Christ in this parable proposes to sinners of all ages, and the sense in which it is usually expounded. But how are we to regard here the murmurings of those who came first? Inasmuch as all are rewarded, they are all just and happy; and it is certain that in the day of retribution, those among the just who shall have been least favored, far from reproaching the Lord with the inequality of his favors, shall, on the contrary, bless and applaud him for his superabundant bounty to others. This reflection, joined to the surmise that so considerable a part of the parable cannot be a mere adjunct to it, or merely ornamental, warrants the application of it to the two races, and the application is quite correct. The Jews, if you compare peo-

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nized both truths in the recompense of the elect. Protestants, who misunderstand the merit thereof, have abused several expressions in this parable, for the purpose of sustaining their error, and have distorted the sense of some other passages which tell against their erroneous doctrine. This has induced us to place here this exposition.

(23) All those spoken of in the parable being elect, inasmuch as all received the pence, we do not further see how this conclusion can refer to the parable. But we can very easily connect it with those words which go immediately before: *So shall the last be first, and the first last.* This sort of subversion may excite surprise: the utter exclusion of the greater number of those who are called should surprise us much more. Wherefore the matter presents itself as if Jesus Christ said: You seem surprised at hearing me state that the first called shall be sent to the lowest rank; how much more should you wonder that, amongst this great number of men who have been called, and who shall yet be called, very few shall have the reward.

ple to people, had been called from the time of Abraham, and the Gentiles were only called by the apostles. Moreover, if we compare man with man, each Jew in particular had toiled all his life in the vineyard of the Lord. Circumcised from his birth, he had borne the intolerable yoke of the law from that moment until the day when he embraced the evangelical law. Then, according to the promise, he had received in baptism both the remission of his sins and the quality of child of God and heir of the heavenly kingdom. But a Gentile who became converted, received, as well as he, this precious penny: a Gentile, who had been a stranger to this alliance, and to whom nothing had ever been promised; and if we consider what he was in himself, he was a man who had hitherto lived without God, without law, without morals, the sport of his passions, the slave of all vices, and the worshipper of demons. From the midst of these horrors, he opened his eyes to the light of faith which was presented to him, and at the same moment he became equal to the children of the promise. We are aware of the murmurs which arose amongst the Jews in consequence of this equality which they had never anticipated, and which they could not behold without envy. Perhaps the discontent would have gone so far as to make them withdraw from the Church, or to prevent their entering into it, like the brother of the prodigal child, if those two parables had not prepared them for this great event; for both have the same object, and the antidote was not more than requisite in order to prevent the consequences of the scandal which should arise amongst the Jews with reference to this subject. But if they tend to the same end, they do so by different paths, as it is easy to discern from the different reasons which they give for this conduct of God. That of the first parable is the paternal love which God entertains towards all men, without excepting those who have wandered farthest from his holy ways. That of the second is, as we have said, his perfect independence in the distribution of his graces, which enables him to grant them to whomsoever he pleases, and in the measure that he pleases, without any other reason for the preference than his own good pleasure; or for his predilection, but the predilection itself.

This occurred in that part of Judea beyond the Jordan, where we have seen that Jesus then was. We have previously said that he

was on his way towards Jerusalem; but as it was his design not to reach the city until the approach of the feast of the Passover, he proceeded very slowly, teaching on the way, and curing the sick who came before him. It is even apparent that he prolonged his sojourn in the places in which he had resolved to diffuse yet other lights and graces, when an accident, which, however, was not such to him who had foreseen and willed it, made him advance on a sudden almost to the walls of the capital. This was the sickness and death of Lazarus, whose resurrection must be regarded as one of the most memorable events of this history, not only because it was the greatest miracle which Jesus Christ performed during his whole mortal life, but, moreover, on account of its consequences; for we may consider it as the proximate cause of the Saviour's death. Too plain to leave any room for their wicked subtleties, this miracle drove his enemies to despair, and to them there now remained no other course than either to adore him or to crucify him. Between these two extremes envy never hesitated; and its characteristic excess of malice would suffice to make us aware on which part it decided, even if history had left us in ignorance of the fact.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS.—FIRST CONSULTATION AGAINST JESUS CHRIST.—CAIPHAS PROPHESIES.—JESUS RETIRES TO EPHRAIM.

(*a*) "Now there was a certain man sick, named Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary, and of Martha, her sister. Mary was she that anointed the Lord with ointment (1), and wiped his feet with

(*a*) St. John, xi. 1–56.

(1) Since Saint John designates her by this trait, it must, therefore, belong exclusively to one person, otherwise the sign would be equivocal. Moreover, the Church, in the Office of Saint Magdalen, only makes one and the same person of her whom some interpreters would fain make two, and even three different persons. On both sides it is merely an opinion; but we may say that the opinion of those who multiply the Marys

her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. His sister, therefore, sent to Jesus, saying: Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick (2). And Jesus, hearing it, said to them (3): This sickness is not unto death (4); but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus (5). When he had heard, therefore, that he was sick, he still remained in the same place two days; then after that he said to his disciples: Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say to him:

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is neither grounded upon so decisive a reason, nor so respectable an authority, as the reason we have just advanced, and the authority we have cited.

(2) This is, according to the fathers, the model of perfect prayer. It consists in the simple expression of want, accompanied by a firm confidence in God. This confidence is founded upon the knowledge which we have of the goodness, of the power, and of the wisdom of God. By his goodness he wisheth well to us; by his power he is enabled to do us good; by his wisdom he shall discern what is most advantageous to us; a state of things which produces resignation, happen what may, because he knows better than we what is necessary for us.

A truly faithful soul, which has not obtained from God the particular favor which it sought from him, is only inclined to utter this single expression: It was not good for me, I was deceived.

(3) Since he said it *to them*, the deputation was, therefore, composed of several.

(4) The principal effect of death is to cut off forever from the society of the living. That of Lazarus was not to have this effect. It is in this sense that it is said that his sickness is not unto death.

(5) Jesus Christ, as God, has loved men from all eternity: as man, he has loved them during time, and from the instant of his conception, with that supernatural love of charity which has God alone for its motive and its end. We are not unaware that he entertained these two sorts of love for Martha, for her sister Mary, and for their brother Lazarus; and that, too, with the predilection which he entertains towards the saints and the predestined. But as man, he might entertain, and he did entertain, in point of fact, various other sorts of love, viz., natural love, founded upon kindred, familiarity, sympathy, &c.; love of esteem and complacency, founded upon upright inclinations and virtuous morals; love of gratitude, founded upon the attachment which was evinced towards him. He did not entertain these latter varieties of love for all men, because he did not find cause for them in all men; but he might have entertained them towards those in whom he found cause: such were Lazarus and his two sisters, towards whom Jesus Christ must have entertained the love of complacency, inasmuch as they were virtuous persons, and that of gratitude, inasmuch as they did good to him. We thus have the sense in which it is here stated that he loved them, that is to say, that he entertained a particular friendship for them. We cannot doubt that he entertained these sorts of love or friendship, because it is evident that they are not sinful, and it is a matter of faith that Jesus Christ assumed all that belongs to human nature, with the exception of sin.

Rabbi, the Jews but just now sought to stone thee (6); and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered: Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not (7), because he seeth the light of this world; but if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him. These things he said; and after that he said to them: Lazarus, our friend, sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. His disciples, therefore, said: Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. But Jesus spoke of his death, and they thought that he spoke of the repose of sleep; then, therefore, Jesus said to them plainly: Lazarus is dead, and I am glad, for your sake (8), that I was not there (9), that you may believe; but let us go to him. Then Thomas, who is called Didymus (10), said to his fellow-disciples: Let us also go, that we may die with him (11). So Jesus came (12), and found that he had been four days already in the sepulchre (13). Now, Bethania was near Jeru-

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(6) *But now.* In the text we read *nunc.* Fear rendered still present to their mind what had occurred about two months before.

(7) It is a figurative mode of saying: the time when I have resolved to die is not yet come; until then I have nothing to apprehend. Thus it was that Jesus Christ sent word to Herod: *I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the following day,* as it is in the same sense that at the time of his passion he said to those who came to arrest him: This is your hour and the power of darkness.

(8) In order that you may be strengthened in faith, for they already believed.

(9) He was there as God, but he speaks as man.

(10) This is the Greek translation of the name of Thomas; for Thomas in Hebrew signifies Twin, as Didymus does in Greek.

(11) He spoke this sincerely and from his heart, and not ironically, as some have very injudiciously asserted. These construe his words as if he spoke thus: Shall we also go, that we may be stoned to death along with him? The Gospel does not leave us in ignorance of the faults of the apostles. The religious respect which is due to the apostles does not permit us to attribute faults to them of which they were innocent. Much less does it permit us to exaggerate, so as to give a faulty character to actions replete with strength and heroism, such as was the resolution which Saint Thomas exhibited upon this occasion, wherein he raised the courage of the irresolute and trembling disciples.

(12) After two days' march. He was not, therefore, at Jericho, as some moderns assert; for it is improbable that he could have taken two days to accomplish the six or seven hours' journey from Jericho to Bethania. But what demonstrates that he had come from a greater distance, and even from beyond the Jordan, is this expression which he made use of to his disciples: Let us go into Judea. One was, of course, in Judea when he was in Jericho.

(13) It follows from this that Lazarus had been interred the very day of his death,

salem, about fifteen furlongs off; and many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Martha, therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died (14); but now also I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Thy brother shall rise again, saith Jesus to her. Martha said to him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day. Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life (15); he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live (16); and every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die forever. Believest thou this? Yea, Lord, she saith to him, I have believed that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into this world (17). And when she had said these things, she went, and called her sister Mary secretly, saying: The Master is come, and calleth for thee. She, as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly, and cometh to him; for Jesus was not yet come into the town, but he was still in that place where Martha had met him.

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which appears rather precipitate. Perhaps the nature of his disease did not allow of keeping over the corpse; or perhaps it might have been on the eve of the Sabbath, a reason which rendered it obligatory, as we know, to detach the Saviour from the cross, and to place him in the sepulchre immediately after he expired.

(14) Imperfect faith. Jesus Christ, from a distance, might hinder him from dying, as well as if near; but the discourse exhibits calm moderation. Saint Chrysostom, who represents to himself the cries and lamentations which would have been uttered by other women, if placed in the same circumstances as the two sisters, gives them credit for this self-restraint.

(15) He raises Martha to higher notions; she thought she had only to ask in order to obtain. He informs her that she does not even require to ask; for he who is the resurrection and the life, that is to say, who is the author and source of both one and the other, does not require to ask for what he possesses and has within himself.

(16) Although he be dead, shall live, that is to say, that he shall recover life by the resurrection. He who lives shall not die forever, because he shall only die in order to rise again. Others translate, "shall never die," which is true in the sense that a death which is followed by a happy resurrection is merely a sleep.

(17) It is the confession of Saint Peter. Martha has the honor of being the first woman whom we know to have made it. The entire faith is comprised therein, but this faith was not as yet entirely developed. Martha's case here resembled that of a Catholic who, when interrogated whether he believes such and such an article of faith, of which he should have merely a confused idea, would reply sincerely, and without evasion: I believe all which the Church believes and teaches.

"The Jews, who were with her (18) in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up speedily, and went out, followed her, saying: She goeth to the sepulchre to weep there. When Mary, therefore, was come where Jesus was, seeing him, she fell down at his feet, and saith to him: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus, therefore, saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her weeping, he groaned in the spirit (19), and troubled himself, and said: Where have you laid him? They say to him: Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept (20). The Jews, therefore, said: Behold how he loved him. But some of them said: Could not he that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die (21)? Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre: now, it was a cave, and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith: Take away the stone (22). Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him: Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days. Jesus saith to her: Did not I say to thee, that if thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the glory of God? They took, therefore, the stone away, and Jesus lifting up his eyes, said: Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me (23). And I knew that thou hearest me

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(18) Mary remained in the company of those who came to pay compliments of condolence. It appears by this narrative, and by that of the repast which Jesus Christ made with the two sisters, that Martha occupied herself in the housekeeping, and that Mary did the honors of the house, each pursuant to her taste or capacity.

(19) Which usually precedes tears, especially in men whose masculine character shrinks at first from the emotion which produces tears. In us this groaning is involuntary; but it was voluntary in the Man-God; this is the reason why it is said that he troubled himself.

(20) To weep with those who weep is, according to Saint Paul, a duty of charity which Jesus Christ desired to fulfil as well as others. He might also weep at the sight of human miseries, of which he had so affecting an image before his eyes; and it was not unworthy of him to shed tears at the death of his friend.

(21) Had he remained without shedding tears, these people might have accused him of hardness of heart. Whatever course may be taken, there are persons whose censure can never be eluded. The wise man acts as he ought, and leaves people to speak as they like.

(22) Jesus Christ might miraculously raise the stone, but he did not wish to do so: 1st. Because human means being sufficient, the miracle was useless. 2d. Because the fetid odor from the corpse rendered indubitable the miraculous event of the resurrection.

(23) Therefore he had prayed for it, but unnecessarily, as we have already said, and

always, but because of the people who stand about, I have said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth! And resently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding-bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him, and let him go. Many, therefore, of the Jews who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in him; but some of them went to the Pharisees, and told them the things that Jesus had done."

Did these Jews, who made it their business to report this prodigy, belong to the great mass of those who believed, or to the small number of the unbelievers? Was it reported by them with the design of converting the Pharisees to Jesus Christ, or for the purpose of exciting them still more against him? This matter is very uncertain, and the knowledge thereof is of very slight consequence. If we were to judge it by its effect, their intention could not be otherwise than extremely bad. For, being more highly scandalized at this resurrection than they would have been if they had received information that the Saviour had just committed murder, "the chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we, and what are we thinking about? this man doth many miracles." Let the reader remark that they do not here treat him as a blasphemer, nor as a seducer of the people, nor as resisting the ordinances of Moses and the authority of the Cæsars; such language would have done very well before the mob, who are only capable of believing what is told them, and repeating what they hear. Whereas the Pharisees knew so well in their own hearts that such characteristics by no means belonged to the Saviour, that to use such language in familiar intercourse with each other, would be exposing themselves to be considered as silly as the populace upon whom they sought to palm these absurdities. "For this man does many miracles"—be-

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he might not have made the solicitation. He had solicited it as man, and, even in that quality, he is always heard. It was not for himself that he had asked it, but for us, since he returns thanks for our sake. He did not require it for himself; but how could he want any thing affecting us? This can only be explained by his love; but who can explain to us this love, which makes him love creatures whom he is not obliged to love, and whom he has so many reasons to hate?

hold his crime! or, to speak more accurately, behold his transgression, in the estimation of these proud men, who saw with no other feeling than vexation the ascendancy that such astounding works gave him over the public mind, and the diminution of their own credit, being the inevitable result of the former! This it is which makes them add: "If we let him alone so, all will believe in him."

They saw themselves on the point of being abandoned, and left to an ignominious solitude. This was the humiliating inference which they drew in the depth of their hearts; but they would have shrunk from expressing it by word of mouth. Here we have the reason why, instead of this personal interest which they did not dare to avow, they alleged the interest of the public, and the state threatened with impending ruin, if an opposition were not organized against the progress of so dangerous a man, "and the Romans [*they say*] will come and take away our place and nation (24)."

It remained to be said that they must get rid of him, and immolate him for the public safety; but this would have pointed too distinctly to the crime which they meditated, and on this account they could hardly pronounce it. The crime was desirable; but it was further desirable to be enabled to say, after it had been committed, that another was the author thereof, and to cast all the odium on him, whilst sharing with him the profits. Wherefore it seems that they exchanged glances, and that by these looks they mutually asked each other for the fatal word, which no one had the boldness to utter; when, setting aside all delicacy, and deriding, as it were, the inconsistency of this latter scruple, "one of them, named Caiphas, being the high priest for that year, said to them: You know nothing, neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

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(24) This is the prophecy of what really occurred to them for not having believed in Jesus Christ, and for having put him to death. The just man does not always succeed; the wicked fail much oftener. But the first, who only employed legitimate means, has in his favor the testimony of his conscience, and, instead of earthly goods, the hope of heavenly treasures. What a source of consolation! The others add to the sense of their misfortune, remorse for the crimes which have brought on their woe, and the prospect of the eternal chastisement which these crimes have earned for them; what an accumulation of despair!

The mind of this wicked man was utterly engrossed by the evil meaning conveyed in his own words, viz., that we should make no scruple of sacrificing an innocent victim to self-interest: a false and abominable maxim, even if the interest of a whole people were at stake. But his words also contained a mysterious and profound meaning which he did not comprehend, and of which he had not even any notion, viz., that the world could not be saved otherwise than by the death of Jesus Christ. The first of these two meanings was his own; the second was that of the Holy Ghost, who had made him utter such words as announced this great truth, at the same time that they expressed the perverse meaning which Caiphas had then in his mind. Now, it is with reference to this second meaning that it is said that "this he spoke not of himself; but being the high priest of that year (25), he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed (26)."

But the murderous meaning, which was the only one then understood, was universally adopted. "From that day, therefore, they devised to put Jesus to death." We see by that in what estimation we should hold the judicial formality which they appeared to observe when they had him in their power. If they called witnesses, and listened to them; if they subjected the Saviour to a species of interrogatory, it was all for the purpose of blindfolding the world, and in order that it might be reported that evidence had been heard, and that the pretended criminal had been judicially examined; for, in reality, he was already judged and condemned to death: the sen-

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(25) Prophecy, the gift of pronouncing oracles in religious matters, is attached to dignity, and not to merit. It became the wisdom of God that such should be the case, because we always know where dignity exists, and we can never have any assurance of the existence of virtue. *The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts.*—Malachi, ii. 7.

(26) In order to gather from all parts of the earth into one and the same Church all the children of God, that is to say, all those who were to constitute it; for they were not as yet the children of God, and they only became such when they received the character by baptism. Jesus Christ was also to die for those who did not receive him, since he was to die for all men. But allusion is made here to those only to whom the fruits of his death were applied.

tence had anticipated the trial, and all the subsequent deliberations only turned upon the means of putting it into execution.

The hour was approaching, but had not yet come. Jesus, who, in order to exhibit his power, had just braved the fury of his enemies, wished also to give his disciples the example of a wise timidity and a prudent flight. Thus were alternately seen the divinity piercing the veil of humanity, and humanity shrouding with its weakness the lustre of the divinity. "Wherefore Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews; but he went into a country near the desert, unto a city that is called Ephrem, and there he abode with his disciples. And the pasch of the Jews was at hand, and many from the country went up to Jerusalem before the pasch to purify themselves. They sought, therefore, for Jesus, and they discoursed one with another, standing in the temple: What think you that he is not come to the festival-day? And the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he was, he should tell, that they might apprehend him."

CHAPTER XLIX.

RETURN TO JERUSALEM.—ZEAL OF THE TWO DISCIPLES REPRESSED.—THE PASSION FORETOLD WITH ITS CIRCUMSTANCES.—AMBITIOUS PRETENSION OF THE CHILDREN OF ZEBEDEE.—MURMURING OF THE OTHER DISCIPLES, AND INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO THEM.

(*a*) "It came to pass when the days of his assumption were accomplishing, that Jesus," surmounting, by a generous effort, all the repugnance of nature, "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. He sent messengers before his face" to announce his arrival in the places through which he should pass. "Going, they entered into a city of the Samaritans, to prepare for him" what was necessary. But "they received him not, because his face was of one going to Jerusalem!" Now, journeying towards Jerusalem, during the time of the Passover,

(*a*) St. Luke, ix. 51–56.

was a marked declaration of being a Jew and an anti-Samaritan. "When his disciples, James and John, had seen this," unable to endure the affront cast upon their Master, and burning with the desire to avenge him: "Lord, they said, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" This sally has given rise to the suspicion that the two disciples were amongst the number of the deputation sent, and that some personal anger may have been mixed up with their resentment. But their zeal, even supposing that it had no other object than the glory of the Saviour, did not meet his approbation. "Jesus turning, rebuked them, saying: You know not of what spirit you are (1). The Son of man came not to destroy souls (2), but to save; and they went into another town."

(*a*) "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them, and they were astonished, and following, were afraid." The animosity of the Jews made the disciples always tremble for their Master and for themselves. The conspiracies, hitherto abortive, might at length succeed; and what security had they that they might not also become the victims? Such was the subject of their apprehensions, which Jesus Christ made no attempt to dispel. He was rather inclined to change apprehension into certainty, at least as far as regarded himself, personally, had they been capable of understanding him. For, (*b*) "taking unto him the twelve, he began to tell them the things that should befall him: Behold, he said to them, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of man. He

(*a*) St. Mark, x. 32.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xx. 17; St. Mark, x. 32–34; St. Luke, xviii. 31.

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(1) They did not as yet know the spirit of the Gospel, which is a spirit of meekness, and they speak in accordance with the spirit of the old law, which was a spirit of rigor. However, we behold instances of severity under the Gospel, and of meekness under the old law. Peter, by virtue of his word, strikes Ananias and Sapphira dead at his feet. Eliseus, far from allowing harm to be inflicted upon the Syrians who came to take him, orders them to be sent back safe and sound, after providing them with food. This evinces that meekness is only the predominant quality of the new law, as rigor was that of the old law, and that here the general rule is not without exception.

(2) We have in the text: to destroy souls. This expression, in Scripture, is understood to refer to bodily as well as spiritual life. Jesus Christ, who never did aught but good to souls or bodies, spoke it here in both these significations.

shall be betrayed to the chief priests, to the scribes, and ancients. They shall condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles. They shall mock him (3), and spit on him, and scourge him, and kill him, and the third day he shall rise again."

We have, in this prophecy, the detailed history of the passion of the Saviour, from the betrayal of Judas until the resurrection. The terms thereof are clear and precise, and it seems that it is impossible to misunderstand them. Yet the disciples, to whom Jesus Christ repeated, for the third time, this prediction, (*a*) "understood none of these things; this word was hid from them, and they understood not the things that were said." So true it is that nothing is more unintelligible than what we do not wish to understand, nor more incredible than that which we are not disposed to believe. But, although they were not then understood, these prophecies were not without their use. They were serviceable in diminishing at least the surprise and dejection of the disciples when the event occurred, and who knows but it was this which sustained, or revived, the courage of the well-beloved disciple? Moreover, the prediction of his death, with so many circumstances which the human mind could not foresee, was a certain proof that, on the Saviour's part, his death was perfectly free and voluntary, and it concerned his glory to place the matter beyond all doubt.

What proves that the disciples had no conception of the meaning of their Master's discourse, is the request which two of the most cherished had the boldness to make. Even at this very juncture, when he had just closed the detail of his future humiliations, in a manner so affecting, and so capable of curing them of all ambition, (*b*) "the sons of Zebedee, James and John, come to him, saying: Master, we desire that whatsoever we shall ask thou wouldst do it for us. He

(*a*) St. Luke, xviii. 34. (*b*) St. Mark, x. 35–37; St. Matthew, xx. 20–21.

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(3) *They.* The Gentiles who committed the greater part of these cruelties, although in the text this may equally refer to the Jews, and with reason; for we may say that they did all the evil which they caused to be done. It was they who scourged the Saviour, and who crucified him by the hands of the Gentiles. They delivered him over to the Gentiles solely with this intention. The crime of the executioner is simple; he is only guilty of the execution. That of the author is double; he is guilty of the crime which he commits and of that which he causes to be committed.

said to them: What would you that I should do for you? Grant to us, they said, that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left (4), in thy glory." Another evangelist relates the transaction in a different way. "Then," says he, that is to say, immediately after the prophecy of the passion, "came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee, with her sons, adoring, and asking something of him: who said to her: What wilt thou? She said to him: Say that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom."

The request is precisely the same; and the two recitals, although different, do not contradict each other: the mother may have repeated what her children had said, or the children what the mother had said; or else, what appears most likely, the mother alone may have spoken, but in her children's name, for whom, as it were, she pleaded; and one evangelist may have attributed to them a request which had them alone for its object, and which their mother had only made at their suggestion, or at least with their connivance. In the same way the centurion is made to utter the prayer which his deputies made in his name, praying for the cure of his servant. However it was, inasmuch as the request regarded the two brothers, it was to them that Jesus addressed the reply: (*a*) "You know not, he said to

(*a*) St. Matthew, xx. 22–28; St. Mark, x. 38–41.

(4) Jesus Christ had promised them all that they should be seated upon thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. What an elevation for poor fishermen, who could not have ventured to hope that they should be the first even in their own town! Nevertheless these poor fishermen were not yet content. Being promised the enjoyment of thrones, each of them wished to have the first, and their pride was humbled by the very thought of seeing one take precedency of the other. Ambition has no limits; we must say this in reference to all men without exception. It always ascends, according to the expression of the Psalmist. When it seems to confine its pretensions to a middle rank, the reason is because this rank happens to be the only one within reach. When ambition finds itself placed in this rank, this will merely be a step to rise to another. No sooner is it raised to this, than it turns its thoughts to the rank above. In mediocrity, we sigh after the pageantry and magnificence of the rich; the rich regard with an eye of envy the titles and the prerogatives of grandeur; the great man would fain become a prince; the prince aspires after sovereignty, and the sovereign to universal monarchy. The objects are different according to the different positions: ambition is ever the same, as strong in a villager who wishes to become the chief man in his village, as in Cæsar desiring to rule the Roman Empire.

them, what you ask. Can you drink of the chalice (5) that I shall drink (6), or be baptized wherewith I am baptized? We can (7), they say to him. My chalice, indeed, he saith to them, you shall drink (8), and with the baptism wherewith I am baptized you shall be baptized. But to sit on my right hand or on my left is not mine to give, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father (9)."

But pride ever meets pride in its way. If, amongst the apostles, some sought to be the first, others did not wish to be thus distanced. There was not one of them who did not deem himself of-

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(5) The chalice and baptism signify the passion of the Saviour: he elsewhere makes use of these two terms in order to express the same thing. It appears by divers texts in Scripture, that the word chalice was much used for the purpose of signifying sufferings. It is a metaphor drawn from a bitter potion which an individual might be obliged to quaff. The word baptism, in the figurative sense, is more circumscribed; it is seldom appropriated to any thing but the passion, in which Jesus Christ was, as it were, bathed in the flood of his own blood. Some understand by the chalice the death of Jesus Christ, and by the baptism the assemblage of torments which he endured in every part of his sacred body.

(6) If we suffer with Jesus Christ, says Saint Paul, we shall be glorified with him. It is in this sense above all others that they did not know what they asked. So great a glory could not be conferred through favor; it could only be the reward of merit. The aspirant should either purchase it at the price of his blood, or otherwise renounce it.

(7) That is to say, we are disposed to do so; for it is not certain that they as yet had the courage. It is always praiseworthy and salutary to make good resolutions, but still we can place no confidence except in tried virtue. *What doth he know that hath not been tried?*—Eccles. xxxiv. 9.

(8) We read of the martyrdom of Saint James in the Acts of the Apostles. Saint John died a natural death. But if martyrdom did not await him, he awaited martyrdom. We know that Domitian caused him to be plunged into a cauldron of boiling oil. He came forth from it more fresh and more vigorous than ever; but transported subsequently to the island of Patmos, he there suffered the rigors of a distressing exile. The Church recognizes several other martyrs who have not suffered any greater pains than he did.

(9) Besides that these places shall only be adjudged to merit, a special choice on the part of God is necessary, in order to be called to this merit to which they shall be adjudged. From all eternity this choice is made and recorded in the councils of the Most High. The Son and the Holy Ghost have no less a part in it than the Father. However, Jesus Christ attributes it more particularly to the Father, who, in the Trinity, is the first principle, as if to give to understand that, if it were possible that any inequality could exist between the divine persons, it is that which should be highest and most absolute in the Divinity that should dispose of these places. We may judge, therefore, how silly it was to hope that these could be obtained through favor, or through the solicitations of a woman.

fended by this ambitious pretension, and "hearing it, the ten were moved with indignation against the two brothers, James and John." This furnished an occasion for the Saviour to give to them all the admirable lesson which we are about to see. "He called them to him, and saith to them: You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that are the greater exercise power over them. It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister, and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant; even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many."

Jesus had already stated more than once that we must become little in order to become great, and that by humility alone can we attain lasting elevation. This lesson, which is found repeated in the words which he has just pronounced, is not the only lesson here inculcated. He also presents therein the sole motive which can make authority the object of legitimate desire, viz., serving our fellow-men; and the noblest use which can be made of authority, is to exhaust our energies, and, if it be necessary, to sacrifice ourselves utterly and entirely for those whom we have a right to command. Such is the authority which a tender mother exercises over her little child, which may be regarded at the same time as the highest of all earthly authorities, and the most obedient of all servitudes. Nothing, perhaps, could furnish a better illustration than this comparison, had not the Saviour made us sensible of it by another much more affecting and more persuasive example, viz., his own. From his earliest infancy, during which the state of weakness which he had chosen to assume required him to accept the services of his mother, we always behold him obeying, and never commanding, always serving, and never served. His time, his cares, his strength, his repose, his glory, his blood, and his life—all, without exception, were lavished for the benefit of mankind. During the three years which he passed with his disciples, there can be no doubt but that he refused their services, and tendered them his own. Although the evangelists furnish us with no details on this subject, they yet say enough to give us to understand that such was the case. If the washing of the feet is one of the most signal acts, it is far from being

the only one; and are not all the details comprised in that single assertion, which the Saviour was only enabled to advance, because his conduct was the sensible and perpetual proof thereof? I am "not come to be ministered unto, but to minister." What the holy Pope Saint Clement relates of his master, the apostle Saint Peter, may find a suitable place here. He says that, when the holy apostle beheld any one asleep, the tears immediately started to his eyes. When they inquired from him the reason, he replied, that this object recalled to him the remembrance of his dear Master, who, whilst they all were asleep, watched for all; and if it so happened that any of them uncovered himself whilst sleeping, or tossed his poor bed, he carefully covered him again, and replaced what had been disturbed. This one instance will suffice to show his usual manner of treating his disciples, and will make us thoroughly acquainted with that maternal authority, which it is lawful to desire, as it is also lawful for a woman to desire to have children, in order that she may have persons to love as much, and more than herself, and upon whom she may lavish her affections, her cares, her attentions, her health, and sometimes her life. It is thus, I say, that it is lawful to desire authority, because such a desire springs from the pure motive of charity. This is, to the letter, desiring, not the pageantry, but the (*a*) "good work of the episcopacy"—the only thing which charity allows us to desire therein, because "charity is not ambitious;" whereas the desires of ambition point exclusively towards the titles and prerogatives of authority, because ambition is any thing but charitable.

(*a*) St. Paul, I. Tim. iii. 1.

CHAPTER L.

PASSAGE THROUGH JERICHO.—A BLIND MAN RESTORED TO SIGHT.—ZACHEUS.—PARABLE OF THE TEN POUNDS.—SIGHT RESTORED TO TWO BLIND MEN.

EPHREM, whither the Saviour retired after the resurrection of Lazarus, is placed by geographers northeast of Jerusalem, on the frontiers of Judea and Samaria, or, according to the more ancient authorities, on the confines of the tribes of Ephraim and of Benjamin. In proceeding thence to the capital, one could not pass through Jericho without turning aside towards the east. The nature of the roads, or the necessity of finding accommodation, might indeed render this imperative; but, supposing that none of these reasons existed, the great things which Jesus had to do and to say in Jericho were a sufficient reason for him to prolong his journey in order to go thither. He therefore took his way through that city, and the moment he set foot upon its territory, he began to display his Almighty goodness. (*a*) "It came to pass, when he drew nigh Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the wayside, begging. And when he heard the multitude passing by, he asked what this meant. They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by; and he cried out, saying: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. They that went before rebuked him (1), that he should hold his peace; but he cried out much more: Son of David, have mercy on me. Jesus standing, commanded him to be brought unto him (2); and when he was come near, he asked

(*a*) St. Luke, xviii. 35–43.

(1) Further on we shall find them murmuring, although with as little success, because the Saviour takes up his abode with a publican. There are two classes of people with whose notions we do not on a single occasion find Jesus Christ coinciding, viz., those who censure and those who rebuke others. The reason is, that nothing is less conformable to his benignity than the malignity of the first, nor to his meekness than the harshness of the second.

(2) If, as they commanded him, he had ceased to cry out, perhaps the Saviour would not have approached him, and he might have remained blind. Those who wish to approach God will not reach him, if they do not begin by despising the remonstrances of worldlings.

him: What wilt thou that I do to thee (3)? Lord, he said, that I may see. Receive thy sight, Jesus said to him; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he saw and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God."

"And entering in, Jesus walked through Jericho" with the accumulating throng which the cure of the blind man had gathered around him. "And behold, there was a man named Zacheus, who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. He sought to see Jesus, who he was, and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree, that he might see him (4); for Jesus was to pass that way. When Jesus was come to the place, looking up, he saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house. Zacheus made haste and came down, and received him with joy. And when all saw it, they murmured, crying that he was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner." Little they knew that, by the invisible operation of grace, he whom they thought a sinner was already a saint. "But Zacheus standing, said to the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor (5); and if I have wronged any man of any thing, I restore

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(3) A mother knows perfectly well the wants of her son; she wishes, notwithstanding, that he should declare them to her. She does so not only in order that he may recognize her authority, but moreover that she may have the pleasure of hearing him lisp his desires, of seeing him testify his confidence; she does so to excite and foster his gratitude by the facility she evinces to comply with his wishes. She loves him and wishes to be loved by him: behold the motives, which are also those of God, when he requires that we should express to him our wants, which he knows better than we do ourselves.

(4) The case of Zacheus is nearly like that of the blind man. When the crowd hindered the first from seeing the Saviour, he did not cease to desire it, as the blind man did not cease to cry out, although it appeared he was not heard at the outset. The latter heeded not the reproofs addressed to him by those who sought to silence him; and Zacheus did not hesitate to ascend the sycamore—a proceeding which must have appeared highly strange in a man of his station, and which might easily have excited the ridicule of the populace. Perseverance in desire, despite of obstacles, and never troubling themselves as to *what will people say?* caused the salvation of both one and the other.

(5) That is to say, I shall give; according to the common interpretation, which we follow. But there are many who understand it in the present sense. According to them, Zacheus, in order to reply to the murmuring of the Jews, makes known, by stating what he was accustomed to do, that he is not so great a sinner as they allege. In

him (6) four-fold (7). Jesus said to him: This day is salvation come to this house (8), because he also is a son of Abraham (9); for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

An event so marvellous seemed to presage great things, and the minds of all, and especially of the disciples, were wonderfully excited in expectation of what might follow. Jesus still labored to disabuse them of the false and flattering ideas which they found it so difficult

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point of fact, a man who is in the habit of giving to the poor the half of his wealth, and of making a four-fold reparation for the wrongs he may commit through mistake (for a man so just and so charitable cannot otherwise do wrong); this man, I say, has decidedly a right to be reckoned a good man; therefore Jesus Christ could not in this supposition add that the day was to that house a day of salvation. It is this reflection which has induced the majority of interpreters to regard his words as the declaration of what he proposed to do in future, and not of what he had hitherto done. However, it was not absolutely impossible that, with so much probity and charity, Zacheus may not have been in a state of grace. Firstly, it is evident that he would not have been in that state if he were a Gentile, as some assert, although it is much more likely that he was a Jew; but, moreover, might he not, he who was rich and a publican, allow himself some forbidden pleasure? But there is something further. Faith in Jesus Christ was thenceforth necessary, at least to those who had had the advantage of hearing his discourses and seeing his miracles. By conferring it upon Zacheus, Jesus Christ conferred, therefore, upon him, what to him had become a necessity in order to secure salvation, and in this sense he might still say that that day was to his house a day of salvation. Thus Saint Peter might say it to the centurion Cornelius, although the latter was addicted to all sorts of good works before the holy apostle came to visit him. Such are the principal reasons upon which these two expositions are grounded. Those who may wish to see these reasons more developed, with others which we do not mention, will find them in *l'Eclaircissement sur le discours de Zachée à Jésus-Christ, par M. l'abbé de Saint Réal.*

(6) Restitution, of all proofs of conversion the most necessary, the least equivocal, and would to God that we could not add, the most rare!

(7) If Zacheus reckoned correctly, as we must presume was the case with a man of his avocations, it follows from his discourse that at least seven-eighths of his wealth legitimately belonged to him. We see by that, that this publican could not be termed a public defrauder.

(8) Like master like house is the usual course of things. There can be no doubt but that Zacheus, who apparently had scandalized his house, was subsequently instrumental in sanctifying it. The obligation of laboring to accomplish this was not more stringent upon him than that of restoring unjustly acquired wealth.

(9) A son of Abraham, although a publican, supposing that he was a Jew. This is in answer to the prejudice against the publicans, whom the Jews seemed no longer to recognize as brethren. A son of Abraham according to the spirit, supposing that he were a Gentile, which should have convinced them that a man is much more the son of Abraham by faith than by blood.

to get over. Nothing is clearer, after the event, than the mysterious prophecy which he is about to make to them; and it was not at all impossible, even before its fulfilment, to see its tendency, and that the reign of Christ was neither so near as they imagined, nor such as they figured it to themselves. But those who did not then comprehend it, saw, in the course of a little time, that nothing had happened which the Saviour had not foretold; and the information, which at first failed to enlighten them, was subsequently efficacious in strengthening their faith; for no word of Jesus Christ was useless, and that divine seed has never failed to produce its fruit sooner or later. "As [*therefore*] they were hearing these things, he added and spoke a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately be manifested: he said, therefore: A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And calling his ten servants, he gave them ten pounds (10), and said to them: Trade till I come. But his citizens hated him, and they sent an embassage after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us (11). And it came to pass that he returned, having received the

(10) The Latin version has it *decem minas*, but as there is no such coin known in our times, we find it translated *ten pounds* in the Douay version.

(11) It appears, from the manner in which this declaration is framed, that it was not to him that the deputation was sent; for if it had been sent to him, the deputies would have been instructed to say: We will not have *you* for our king, and not, We will not have *this man* to reign over us. To whom, therefore, was the embassy addressed? To the prince from whose hands this man was to receive the crown; for the country over which he was to rule as king was that from which he departed. In a word, he went not to seek a distant conquest, but regal sway over his own country. By means of this explanation we can understand the historical cast of the parable; and without it we are utterly at a loss to know what it means. Now this figure, under cover of which Jesus Christ proposes the parable, was quite familiar to the Jews. Their princes usually went to Rome to petition for the investiture of the States over which they were to exercise kingly authority. Herod the Great had proceeded thither; after him Archelaus and other princes of his race went there on the same account. Let us at present suppose that one of them, having proceeded there with this design, a part of the nation should send a deputation to the emperor, for the purpose of declaring that they do not wish him to rule over them; that, notwithstanding this declaration, the candidate prevails; that he returns, and that he revenges himself upon those who had opposed his pretensions; then we shall no longer find any difficulty in understanding the literal sense of the parable. We should further remark, that he who returns with the quality of king is not termed king at his departure, but only a nobleman, a man of quality, *homo nobilis*.

kingdom, and he commanded his servants to be called, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. And the first came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. He said to him: Well done, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a little, thou shalt have power over ten cities. And the second came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. Be thou also, he said to him, over five cities. Another came, saying: Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin (12), for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up what thou didst not lay down (13), and thou reapest that which thou didst not sow. Thou wicked servant, he saith to him, out of thy own mouth I judge thee. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow. Why, then,

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(12) It is true that, in order to make this money productive, it was necessary to expose it to some risk. However, this risk was not a valid reason for leaving it idle. Wherefore, speaking in a general way, we are bound to make available the talent which God confides to us for the public good, although some danger may be encountered in so doing. If a contrary course were adopted, there would be no longer any preachers, nor confessors, nor pastors; except, however, the cases wherein an individual might discern a proximate occasion of losing his soul. Then he must prefer his own salvation to that of the entire world, and this would be the occasion for applying that maxim of the Saviour: *What doth it avail a man to gain*—even for God—*the whole world, if he lose his own soul?*

(13) We do not find that the owner required any thing from those to whom he had confided nothing. We have seen with what more than royal magnificence he rewarded the toil and industry of those who profited by what was intrusted to them. He was not, therefore, of such a character as the bad servant dared to represent him, and the latter calumniates him for the purpose of his own justification. The same course of proceeding is observable in bad Christians, who refuse to render to God what they owe to him, because God, say they, exacts more than can be paid him. If they speak truth, God is a tyrant; but if they speak falsehood, they are impious men, who add blasphemy to prevarication. But it does not occur to them, and they should here remark it, that this criminal apology only serves to render them inexcusable. For if God be, according to them, so severe that he exacts from us more than we can do, why have they not done at least what they could? If he shall punish (horrible idea!) those who do not perform what is impossible, how will he treat those who shall have omitted what is possible? This regards those who do nothing because of the alleged impossibility of doing all. The number is but too great, and we very often hear this error retailed, which is, without contradiction, the most pernicious of all others, and the most destructive of good morals. A relaxation in morals produces but partial disorder; but if morality be pushed to extremes, so as to be thought impracticable, it engenders all sorts of disorders.

didst thou not give my money into the bank (14), that at my coming I might have exacted it with usury? And he said to them that stood by: Take the pound away from him, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. They said to him: Lord, he hath ten pounds (15). But I say to you, that to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him. As for those my enemies, who would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and kill them before me."

Jesus was shortly to depart from this world, in order to receive from the hands of his Father the sovereign dominion which he is eternally to exercise over the whole earth. The Jews, who were to have been his first subjects, but who, on the contrary, were to become his murderers, should, after his departure, fill up the measure of their crimes by persisting in their refusal to have him reign over them. His apostles, and the first faithful whom they put to death, should be, as it were, the deputies whom they sent to heaven to declare that their resolution was taken, and that they would not receive him as their king. On a future day he should return in all his glory, and with all the power which belongs to supreme authority; then citing to his tribunal these hardened culprits, he would force them at last to recognize his rights, and to confess their perfidy, and deliver them over to the executioners of his eternal vengeance. This day is that of the last judgment, which day was to be prefigured by one other day yet to come. That other day was when, delivered up to the Romans, who were to be the first avengers of the

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(14) Is it necessary to observe that Jesus Christ does not here praise the art of making money available by laying it out at interest, but merely the industry of those who have done so? In the same way as in another place, he proposes for an example, not the fraud, but the adroitness of the unfaithful steward.

(15) Since the ten pounds were still his own, the master left him, therefore, sole owner of them, which makes it evident that, when he had made his servants work, he did so for their profit, and not for his own. The same thing occurs on the part of God with reference to us. He leaves us all the profit of the good which we perform, and only reserves the glory for himself. Woe to him who would usurp this share which belongs to God! he would thereby lose the whole profit; and, instead of that glory, the object of his silly ambition, he would only have the shame of not having known how to discern what belongs to God and what to himself.

disowned and outraged Messiah, millions of these wretches were to perish by fire and sword. Behold the principal object of this prophetic parable. We have said that, even previous to the event, the meaning of the parable was very plain, because we here see clearly the departure of this king—figurative of the Messiah—for a foreign land, his long absence and his return signalized by chastisements, which an obstinate rebellion had so justly deserved. The account rendered by his servants, although it occupies so prominent a position in the parable, is not, therefore, an integral part thereof. That is true; but this portion is not, therefore, the less useful. We have in it instruction for Christians, together with instruction for the Jews. Jesus Christ, who spoke of judgment, wished to avail himself of this opportunity to inform us that his justice will not confine itself to the wreaking of vengeance upon those who have denied him, but that it will also require from those who have recognized him an exact account of the goods which have been confided to them. On the same occasion he further informs us how munificently he shall reward those who have made these goods available, and with what severity he shall treat those who have not derived any profit therefrom. What, then, doth he reserve for those who shall have dissipated and destroyed them?

The following account bears so close a resemblance to another which has just been noticed, that they are thought, with some reason, to be one and the same narrative. Every thing is similar in both, with the exception of two circumstances. The first speaks only of one blind man cured, and the second mentions two. Jesus Christ meets the first blind man before his entry into Jericho, and the cure of the two others is placed at his departure from that city. This latter difference is what chiefly makes it questionable whether these were not, in point of fact, two different miracles, the more so as it was not absolutely impossible that the same circumstances should be found in one as in the other. However it may be, as nothing should be lost where all is so precious, we would rather expose ourselves to the chance of a repetition than to that of an omission. (*a*) "And having said these things, he went before, going up to Jerusalem. When they went out from Jericho, a great multitude followed him

(*a*) St. Luke, xix. 28; St. Matthew, xx. 29–34; St. Mark, x. 46.

Two blind men [*one of whom was*] Bartimeus the blind man, the son of Timeus, sitting by the wayside, heard that Jesus passed by, and they cried out, saying: O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us. The multitude rebuked them that they should hold their peace; but they cried out the more: O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us. Jesus stood, and called them, and said: What will ye that I do to ye? They say to him: Lord, that our eyes be opened. And Jesus having compassion on them, touched their eyes. Immediately they saw, and followed him."

CHAPTER LI.

MARY POURS PRECIOUS OINTMENT OVER JESUS CHRIST.—MURMURING OF JUDAS AND THE APOSTLES.—DESIGN OF KILLING LAZARUS.—TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.—VEXATION OF THE PHARISEES.

In the mean time the day was approaching when the Lamb of God was to wash out with his blood the sins of the world, and that innocent victim advanced towards the altar whereon he was to be immolated by the hands of sinners. Continuing his journey towards Jerusalem, he (*a*) "came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life." This small town which lay upon his road was only a little more than one league from the capital. Jesus arrived there "six days before the pasch (1)," not including the

(*a*) St. John, xii. 1–6; St. Mark, xiv. 3; St. Matthew, xxvi. 7.

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(1) Saint Matthew, before he commences the following narrative, represents Jesus Christ as saying to his disciples: You know that after two days shall be the pasch. Some have sought to infer from thence that there were two anointings—one occurring two days before the passover, and the other six days previous, as Saint John expressly states. When Saint Matthew sets about relating the betrayal by Judas, which was planned, in point of fact, two days before the passover, he takes up previously the narrative of the anointing which suggested the design to the traitor. We can conceive that he might have done this, although this fact occurred four days before. Lastly, there are certain circumstances which prove these two to be one and the same occurrence. These are principally, the murmurings of Judas and the disciples,

day of his arrival, nor that of the passover. Hence it was on a Friday; and as he only arrived towards evening, when the repose of the Sabbath had already commenced, this was a reason for his tarrying there. Those who loved him joyfully availed themselves of this occasion to manifest the tender attachment which they entertained towards his person. "They made him a supper there in the house of Simon the leper (2)." Apparently this was one of those public entertainments at which women were not allowed to be present. Thus, "Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with him." As for Mary, she again chose the better part, and testified her love in a manner that was peculiar to herself. "She took a pound of ointment of right spikenard (3), of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair; and

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and the Saviour's answer, which are in both instances exactly the same. What probability is there that the disciples would have repeated, four days subsequently, that which had drawn down upon them a reprimand so severe, and which they could not have so soon forgotten?

(2) It is thought that this is the same individual as Simon the Pharisee, at whose house this sinful woman, who, as we have said, was no other than Mary, watered with her tears the feet of the Saviour. He is termed Simon the leper, perhaps because, in point of fact, he had had the leprosy, and that Jesus Christ had cured him of it; for he was not then laboring under it, since he was allowed to eat in their company. Or, perhaps this may have been a family name, derived from the fact of some one of his ancestors having been a leper, as we find amongst ourselves people denominated the *red-haired*, the *blind-eyed*, the *hump-backed*, the *deaf*, without having themselves any of these corporal blemishes. This fashion of speech, *they made him a supper there*, has occasioned the question to be mooted, whether it was Simon who was at the expense of providing it. Most probably it was he, although several doubt whether it was not Lazarus rather, and his two sisters, or even the inhabitants of Bethania, who were singularly attached to the Saviour, and this latter supposition is not impossible. In this case we should say that they had selected the house of Simon the leper as being the most suitable, and that apparently because it was the most spacious.

(3) In the text, *pistici*. This word, which is derived from the Greek, appears, in its proper meaning, to signify *faithful:* here it means pure ointment, which does not deceive, because it is not adulterated; for every precious liquor is liable to be adulterated. It is in this sense that the Latin authors sometimes term it pure and genuine ointment—*nardum purum et sincerum*. Saint Mark makes use of the term *spicati*, which signifies ointment extracted from the ear, because the best ointment, in point of fact, was extracted from the ear of this plant, the quality of that extracted from the leaves being very inferior. The word "*excellent*" expresses all this in French. *The Douay version translates it "right spikenard."*

breaking the alabaster box (4), she poured it out upon his head (5) as he was at table, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, he that was about to betray him, said: Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein." However, the reason was specious, and the disciples, who believed it to be sincere, were induced by a spirit of charity to make the same objection. (*a*) "There were some had indignation within themselves," after his example, "and said," like him: "Why was this waste of the ointment made? For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and given to the poor; and they murmured against her."

She acted right, and they spoke wrongfully. "And Jesus knowing it," wished at the same time to instruct them and to defend her. Thus, without waiting to unmask the hypocrisy of the traitor, whose reputation he carefully screened until the very end, he contented himself with refuting the reason which Judas had first advanced, and by which the others had allowed themselves to be hurried away. He "said to them," therefore, addressing his speech to all: "Why do you trouble this woman? She hath wrought a good work upon me (6). For the poor you have always with you, and whensoever

(*a*) St. Mark, xiv. 4–9; St. Matthew, xxvi. 10–12.

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(4) This vase was of alabaster: to break it so as to pour out the very last drop was the highest honor of the kind which could be tendered.

(5) Saint Matthew and Saint Mark speak only of the anointing of the head, and Saint John speaks only of that of the feet: the first anointing was in use, and not the second. Mary performed both; but the two evangelists only state what was usually done, and the third what was peculiar to this saintly woman, and what appears to have been specially the result of her devotion.

(6) There are times wherein even the sacred vases must be sold in order to feed the poor: such are times of famine. In ordinary times it is always good, and sometimes even better, to make one's pious gifts subservient to the honoring of Jesus Christ by the decoration of his altars. We know that every one does not entertain this opinion; but it is that of Jesus Christ, and the contrary opinion has Judas for its author.

If it be true, as every one admits, that the decorum and splendor of external worship

you will you may do them good; but me you have not always. What she had she hath done; for she, in pouring this ointment upon my body, hath done it for my burial (7); she is come beforehand to anoint my body for the burial. Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her (8)."

The prophecy is fulfilled, and the fame of this action has resounded to the very extremities of the earth. Those who censured it at first have been themselves its heralds. By consigning it in after times to the holy books, they have immortalized its memory. All ages have known and shall know it: the most eloquent tongues have eulogized and shall eulogize it, even until the end of time. The more inconsiderable the thing may appear in itself, the more miraculous is the accomplishment of the prophecy which promises her this dazzling and eternal glory; and it is with reason that this accomplish-

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serves to foster and to augment piety, we must infer from thence that to contribute thereto is giving spiritual alms.

(7) We read in Saint John, "Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial," which can only be understood in this manner: Do not be displeased at her having kept this perfume for my burial; for Jesus Christ could not say that they should let her retain for a future purpose what he then approved of her pouring out. This sense which we give to the words of Saint John is the sense of the two other evangelists, Saint Matthew and Saint Mark, and it is by reference to them that we explain the passage. The Saviour says that Mary had kept this perfume for his burial, inasmuch as he was upon the point of dying. He knew that after his death she would wish to embalm him, but that she should be prevented from doing so by his resurrection. Now, he wished that she should have the consolation of having rendered this duty to him before his death, since she could not do it afterwards: it is thus that she has embalmed his body beforehand. It is thought that this idea was suggested to her by the Holy Ghost, but we are ignorant whether the Holy Ghost had also revealed to her the entire mystery.

(8) The most vaunted exploits of heroes have never been celebrated so highly nor yet so universally as this action of Mary. The glory which she reaps from it upon earth is but the shadow of that which she shall eternally reap in heaven. Thus shall be honored whom the King of Glory hath a mind to honor (Esther, vi.). But he shall only wish to honor what shall have been done for his glory: all the rest shall be only cause of reproof. The lustre of brilliant talents, of valor, and of conquests shall be buried in the darkness of the abyss. To the darkness of an obscure but innocent life shall succeed a glory more dazzling than the stars of the firmament. Such is the object of the ambition of the saints, wherefore they may be regarded as the most ambitious, whilst at the same time they are the most humble of men.

ment has been regarded as one of the best proofs of the truth of religion.

We have this proof, which the Jews had not. They had another, which we likewise have, but which was much more striking for them than for us, inasmuch as we are always much more struck by what we see: that was the resurrection of Lazarus, which occurred in a place and at a time which served to heighten the lustre of this miracle. It took place, as it were, at the very gates of Jerusalem, and at a time when the approach of the passover had attracted to that great city an innumerable multitude of Jews, of all nations under the sun How ardently must they have desired to see a man resuscitated within a few days! and how much must this desire have been increased by the news which had just been spread abroad, that the author of this miracle had reached Bethania, and that a person might with ease see these two such wonderful men speak and eat together! (*a*) "A great multitude, therefore, of the Jews knew that he was there; and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead."

This sight produced the effect which might be expected, viz., it brought conviction to every mind. Those whose hearts were good yielded at once to the evidence before them, and became faithful. Those whose hearts were wicked and hardened recognized the truth, in the only way by which the wicked do recognize truth which is odious to them, to wit, by an accumulation of rage, and a new series of crimes. They decided upon annihilating evidence which they could not contest; and in order that not a single vestige thereof should remain upon the earth, after having resolved, as we have said, upon the death of Jesus, "the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also, because many of the Jews, by reason of him, went away, and believed in Jesus."

The most brilliant day of the Saviour's mortal life, that day on which he was to be publicly acknowledged as the Messiah and as the King of Israel, was at last arrived. It concerned his glory that the bulk of the people should proceed so far as that recognition; and if, in the end, that same majority should repudiate him, the nation, whilst acting thus, must stand forth in glaring opposition to itself. For he

(*a*) St. John, xii. 9.

must have given sufficient proofs to make himself known, inasmuch as they had already recognized him without any other motive than the conviction of what he was. The minds of the people were disposed towards this demonstration, not by emissaries sent to canvass the masses, and to solicit their suffrages; Jesus did not employ a single one of those means, all of which were employed against him: his virtues, his doctrine, and still more, his miracles, spoke alone in his favor; above all, the resurrection of Lazarus, a recent occurrence, which they had actually before their eyes. Such were his credentials, and the proximate causes of his triumph. But let no one expect to find here the pomp which is usual in princely triumphs. All here is suitable to the character of him who said of himself that he was meek and humble of heart. His enemies could not reasonably conclude from thence that he aspired to royalty, for kings are seldom seen entering a city in such a way as he entered Jerusalem. We must observe, notwithstanding, that, according to the customs of the time and the country, this equipage was not, as it might seem to us, odd and ridiculous; it was merely simple and modest. Its simplicity added new lustre to the Saviour's glory, by showing that the extraordinary honors which he received were not extorted, and, as it were, forced by the awe-inspiring brilliancy which surrounds the kings of the earth, but that they were tendered solely by the high esteem and the profound veneration which his works and his doctrines had inspired.

The repose of the Sabbath had obliged Jesus to spend the whole day in Bethania. (*a*) "The next day," which was the first day of the week, he proceeded on his journey with the whole of his retinue. (*b*) "When they drew nigh to Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto Mount Olivet, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them: Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately at your coming in thither you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her, upon which no man yet hath sat. Loose him, and bring him to me. And if any man shall ask you: Why do you loose him? you shall say thus unto him: Because the Lord hath need of his service; and immediately he will let him come hither."

(*a*) St. John, xii. 12.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xxi. 1–5; St. Mark, xi. 2, 3; St. Luke, xix. 31.

He spoke as a prophet and commanded as a master. By this trait, and some others which seemed to escape from him, we see that his divinity disclosed itself even in the smallest actions. The accomplishment of the prophecies was a still more certain proof of this; "for all this was done that (9) it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet (10), saying: Tell ye the daughter of Zion: behold,

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(9) The prophecy was not the cause of the action, but the action was the cause of the prophecy—that is to say, that Jesus Christ did not perform the act, because the performance thereof had been foretold, but the act had been foretold, because he was to perform it. However, inasmuch as it had been foretold, Jesus Christ could not fail to perform it, and in this manner the prediction became in its turn the cause of the action. But we see that it was merely the cause of an action already resolved and decided upon, which could scarcely, with any propriety, be termed a cause. But if the action is the cause of the prophecy, it is not the action, but the prophecy which, by its accomplishment, becomes a proof of religion. What here proves, therefore, that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, is not the fact of his having entered Jerusalem mounted upon an ass, but his having accomplished the prophecy which announced that the Messiah should so enter into Jerusalem.

The Jews themselves acknowledge that this prophecy regards the Messiah. But could it not be said that a false Messiah might easily appropriate this designation to himself, and that, consequently, it proves nothing in favor of Jesus Christ? Here are solutions which may be given to this objection: 1st. Although several false Messiahs may have appeared, still it never did occur that any one of them entered Jerusalem in the manner which had been foretold, and in which Jesus Christ entered there. It is, therefore, evident, from the event, that this prophecy applies to Jesus Christ, to the exclusion of all others. It proves, therefore, for him, and for him alone, concludes Saint Chrysostom, whose reasoning this is. 2d. It is not each prophecy taken separately, but the concurrence of all the prophecies, which demonstrates that Jesus Christ is truly the Messiah. Thus, even although each in particular should prove nothing, still they all prove, because the whole contribute to the proof of the whole, as weights which, taken separately, might not incline the balance, if united must turn the scale. 3d. Besides the proof which results from the aggregate, there are prophecies which prove by themselves, inasmuch as imposition could never adapt itself to them. Such are, for example, the principal circumstances of the Saviour's passion, described as exactly by the prophets as by the evangelists—his flagellation, his crucifixion, his thirst quenched with vinegar and gall, his clothes being divided, and the casting lots for his tunic; his side pierced; his bones being entirely preserved, whilst they broke those of his fellow-sufferers. It never occurs to any one's mind that Jesus Christ could have entered into an understanding with his executioners respecting what they were to make him undergo.

(10) We read these words in the ninth chapter of the prophet Zachary: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king will come to thee, the just and Saviour. He is poor, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." This version is that of the Vulgate. Saint Matthew has followed that of the Septuagint; he has omitted some words which make no difference in

thy king cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of her that is used to the yoke. The disciples went their way, and did as Jesus commanded them. They found the colt, as he had said unto them, tied before the gate without, in the meeting of the two ways, and they loose him. As they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them: Why loose you the colt? They said as Jesus had commanded them: Because the Lord hath need of him; and they let him go with them. They brought the ass and the colt to Jesus, and laid their garments upon them, and made him sit thereon (11). And Jesus sat upon it, as it is written: Fear not, daughter of Sion; behold thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. These things the disciples did not know at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things to him."

In proportion as Jesus approached the capitol, he diffused there a secret virtue, which moved all hearts, and attracted them

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the sense, and the *mansuetus*, full of meekness, instead of *pauper*, is taken from the Septuagint. The two Hebrew words having these meanings do highly resemble each other, and they have the same origin. We remark in reference to this, that humble meekness usually accompanies poverty. If the remark be just, those whom riches would have rendered haughty and insolent, gain more than they lose by not having them.

(11) We read in the Greek: laid their garments upon them, and made him sit thereon—that is to say, upon both animals, although that may also signify on the garments with which they had covered them. Saint Matthew is the only one of the four evangelists who speaks of the ass having the colt; which is the cause why the majority of interpreters believe that he only rode upon the colt. However, when the Saviour sends to get them, he makes the two disciples say that the Lord hath need of *them;* the disciples spread their garments upon both; and, what is still more decisive, the prophet Zachary said, in formal terms, that he comes riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. Thus the letter seems to signify clearly that, in point of fact, he sat upon both, not at the same time and conjointly (this absurd notion has never occurred to any one), but successively—that is to say, that he made a part of the journey upon the ass, and that when approaching towards Jerusalem he ascended the colt, upon which he made his entry; and thus we have the reason why three evangelists have spoken of the colt only. There is nothing in this either impossible or absurd, and the literal sense should always be preserved, when we can retain it without wounding either reason or piety.

The fathers have found here a mystical sense. The ass who carries the yoke represents, according to them, the Jewish nation; and the colt yet unbroken is figurative of the Gentile people. The figure would be even more just if Jesus Christ, who announced the Gospel to the Jews before announcing it to the Gentiles, had been seated first upon the ass, and then upon the colt.

towards him. (*a*) "A great multitude that was come to the festival-day, when they had heard that Jesus was come to Jerusalem, took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna (12), blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel. As he went, many spread their garments underneath in the way; others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way. When he was now coming near the descent of Mount Olivet, the whole multitude of his disciples began with joy to praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: Blessed be the king who cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven, and glory on high. And the multitudes that went before and that followed cried, saying: Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; blessed be the kingdom of our father (13) David that cometh. Hosanna in the highest." It is further stated, as the principal cause of such lively and universal joy, that (*b*) "the multitude, therefore, gave testimony which was with him when he called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead; for which reason, also, the people came to meet him, because they heard that he had done this miracle."

His enemies also spoke, but for the purpose of expressing the vexation which this spectacle caused them, and the despair to which they were reduced. "The Pharisees, therefore, said amongst themselves: Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold, the whole world is gone after him." Doubtless they had never so earnestly desired to lay their hands upon him, and immolate him to their furious jealousy; but they felt how very dangerous it would be to execute this

(*a*) St. John, xii. 12, 13; St. Matthew, xxi. 8, 9; St. Luke, xix. 37; St. Mark, xi. 10.
(*b*) St. John, xii. 17–19.

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(12) This Hebrew word signifies, save him, or preserve him: it is sung immediately before the canon of the mass. It there conveys the expression of the joy we feel in the near approach of the Saviour to our altars, and is a fervent profession of our faith in the real presence.

(13) It is clear, from these words, that they then recognized him for the Messiah. Five days after, they cried out: Do not release him; but release to us Barabbas. As to him, crucify him. Such is the multitude. Are those who depend upon its favor, or who fear its censure, more rational than they?

project in the midst of that vast multitude, transported with admiration and joy. Wherefore, whilst awaiting a more favorable occasion, (*a*) "some of the Pharisees from amongst the multitude said to him," in a tone where contempt mingled with vexation: "Master, rebuke thy disciples." He alone, in point of fact, had the power to do so; but this was the moment wherein he wished to be glorified; and when the Creator wishes that his creatures should render testimony to his greatness, no created power is able to stifle their voice, as Jesus informed them in this short and energetic answer: "I say to you, that if they shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out (14)."

CHAPTER LII.

CHRIST WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM.—THE ACCURSED FIG-TREE.—SELLERS DRIVEN OUT OF THE TEMPLE.—FAITH OMNIPOTENT.—THE GRAIN OF WHEAT.—JESUS IS TROUBLED.—A VOICE FROM HEAVEN.

In the midst of the acclamations of his disciples, and the maledictions of his envious foes, more flattering still than the felicitations of his friends, if Jesus at first felt a sensible joy, it soon gave way to sadness. The conqueror blended his sighs with the public acclamations, and bedewed with his tears the branches which they had strewed beneath his feet. (*b*) "When he drew near, seeing the city, he wept over it." The cause of this was well worthy of such a heart as his. Jerusalem must perish, and perish on account of its crimes, which it was now going to consummate by the most atrocious of all deeds. After having stained itself with the blood of its Messiah, the queen of cities was henceforward to be no more than a heap of ashes, soaked with the blood of its citizens. The foul deed was

(*a*) St. Luke, xix. 39, 40. (*b*) St. Luke, xix. 41–44.

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(14) They held their peace five days after, when at the time of his passion and death they abandoned him, and fled. But the stones then spoke out, and, by splitting asunder, they published, in their own language, the divinity of the Saviour.

about to be perpetrated in a few days, the chastisement was only deferred for some years; both one and the other were as vividly present to the Saviour as if he had them actually before his eyes. What an object for a Saviour-God! And with how deep sorrow did he then address to this unfortunate city these sad and pathetic words: "If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace! but now they are hidden from thy eyes; for the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee (1), and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation."

After this prophecy, which would have been no more than a menace, if, after the example of Ninive, Jerusalem had tried to prevent the result, Jesus found himself at the term of his journey. (*a*) "When he was come into Jerusalem, the whole city was moved, saying: Who is this? And the people said: This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth, of Galilee. He went into the temple, and having viewed all things round about," as a master, who, returning to his house, examines whether all is in order, "when now the eventide was come," and that this was not the hour to correct the abuses which were committed therein, he postponed it until the following day, and "went out to Bethania with the twelve" apostles.

There is every reason for believing that he passed the night there in prayer and fasting; for (*b*) "the next day, in the morning, when they came out from Bethania, he was hungry, and seeing afar off a fig-tree having leaves, he came, if perhaps he might find any thing

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxi. 10–11; St. Mark, xi. 11.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxi. 18; St. Mark, xi. 12–18.

(1) These days came thirty-eight years after the prediction. Those who have read in Josephus the history of the capture of Jerusalem, will recognize in this prophecy that line of circumvallation which Titus caused to be drawn around its walls in order to blockade it—that wall which he erected three days after, by his whole army hemming it in so closely that nothing could any longer either enter or go out from the city; so that it was consequently reduced to that horrible famine which caused mothers to eat their own children: lastly came the destruction of the city, and the universal massacre of its inhabitants.

on it (2); and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves only, for it was not the season of figs. And Jesus saith to it: May no man hereafter eat fruit of thee (3) any more, forever; and his disciples heard it. And they came to Jerusalem. When Jesus was entered into the temple, he began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple (4), and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves. And he suffered not that any man should carry a vessel through the temple; and he taught, saying to them: Is it not written: My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves." He made use of this term on account of the frauds which were perpetrated in the course of their traffic. "Which, when the chief priests and the scribes," those who authorized this abuse, because they shared in the profits, "had heard, they sought how they might destroy him," without exposing themselves; "for they feared him, because the whole multitude was in admiration at his doctrine."

(*a*) In the mean time "there came to him the blind, and the lame,

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxi. 14–16.

(2) He knew that there was nothing on it; but in the distance he did not see this with the eyes of his body, and it was for the purpose of so seeing it that he drew near, thus conforming himself to our way of acting.

(3) This malediction fell upon the synagogue, the whole of whose religion consisted in ceremonies and words, figured by the leaves, whereas it was sterile in fruits, which are the works of justice and of charity. This was not the season for fruit, and it is not by the display of leaves that the fig-tree represents the synagogue, but only by its barrenness. Those who content themselves with honoring God with their lips, but whose hearts are far from him, who love—that is to say, who have charity of the tongue, and in words, but who have it not by works and in reality—such persons should entertain no doubt that this malediction regards them. The reader may remember what we have said in page 318 of this Part, that what is stated in Scripture with reference to a whole nation is applicable to an individual, as also that what is stated of an individual is sometimes applicable to a whole nation.

(4) See Part I., chap. vi., page 52, and the notes appended thereto. We have here, moreover, the prohibition against carrying vessels through the temple; an abuse too ordinary in such of our churches as have several entrances. It is surprising that this should be tolerated after Jesus Christ has so expressly forbidden it. Were a person to carry nothing through, it would still be an act of irreverence to use the churches like a public road, unless he passed through with an air of composure, in a sedate and decorous manner, pausing to adore, and, if he has time, to pray. What otherwise is a scandal, becomes thus an act of religion, which honors God and edifies men.

in the temple; and he healed them. And the chief priests and scribes seeing the wonderful things which he did, and the children crying in the temple, Hosanna to the Son of David, were moved with indignation, and said to him: Hearest thou what these say? Jesus said to them: Yea, have you never read, out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"

It is very commonly believed that children at the breast miraculously mingled their voices here, and that they articulated the same words. But, even independently of the miracle, the Saviour's answer was sufficiently justified by itself. It approved of what was good, without laying himself open to the malice of those who sought to ensnare him. For could they impute to him as a crime that he did not impose silence upon those to whom God gave the gift of speech?

(*a*) "When evening was come, Jesus leaving them, went forth out of the city into Bethania, and remained there. When they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots; the disciples seeing it, wondered, saying: How is it presently withered away? Peter, remembering, said to him: Rabbi, behold the fig-tree, which thou didst curse, is withered away (5)." Jesus did not then think it expedient to explain this mystery. He contented himself with recalling to their minds the instruction which he had already given to them on faith and on prayer. He "said to them: Amen, I say to you, if you shall have faith, and stagger not (6), not only this of the fig-tree shall you do, but also if you shall say to this mountain, Take up and cast thyself into the sea, and shall not stagger in his heart, but believeth that whatsoever he saith shall be done, it shall be done unto him. Therefore I say unto you, all things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive (7),

(*a*) St. Mark, xi. 19–26; St. Matthew, xxi. 20–22.

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(5) I have seen the wicked highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanus. And I passed by, and lo, he was not.—(Ps. xxxvi. 35, 36.) Thus we see the fortunate sinner pass in a moment from the midst of glory and of pleasures into the shades and horror of death. Those who reflect upon the judgments of the Lord say, then, like Saint Peter: Behold the fig-tree, which thou didst curse, is withered away.

(6) See note 5, page 239, Part I., chap. xxxi.

(7) See note 27, page 136, Part I., chap. xvii.; also pages 302 and 303, Part II., and note 1, page 350, Part II.

and they shall come unto you; and when you shall stand to pray, forgive, if you have aught against any man, that your Father (8) also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your sins. But if you will not forgive, neither will your Father that is in heaven forgive you your sins."

(*a*) "Jesus was teaching daily in the temple. And the chief priests, and the scribes, and the rulers of the people sought to destroy him; and they found not what to do to him: for all the people were very attentive to hear him. Now, there were certain Gentiles among them, who came up to adore on the festival-day. These came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida, of Galilee, and desired him, saying: Sir, we would see Jesus." This canton of Galilee bordered on the Gentile district, which gave rise to the notion that these were acquaintances of Philip, and that it was on this account they addressed themselves to him: "Philip cometh, and telleth Andrew," who was from the same city. Jesus had already declared that "he was sent only to the sheep of the house of Israel, who were lost."—"Again, Andrew and Philip," not daring to present Gentiles to him, without previously ascertaining whether he chose to receive them, went and "told Jesus." We have every reason to believe that he was willing to admit them into his presence, although the Scripture does not formally say so; because this small number of Gentiles constituted in his sight, as it were, the first fruits of Gentilism, which was soon to be followed by a rich harvest. Hence, transported with holy joy, he replied to the two disciples, and to all those within hearing: "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified."

This hour was that of his death, which was only a few days distant. That death was to attract all the people of the earth to the knowledge and love of him, as he himself soon after stated. But it must then have appeared a thing incredible, that death, wherein all human glory is eclipsed, should be to him the source of such wondrous glory. He, therefore, most impressively repeats this truth,

(*a*) St. Luke, xix. 47, 48; St. John, xii. 20–24.

(8) See note 26, page 134, Part I.

and explains it by a natural comparison, which he immediately adds: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Thus Jesus, descended from heaven to the earth, would have enjoyed, even if he had not suffered death, all the rights and prerogatives attached to the quality of Man-God. This precious wheat never lost its properties or its excellence; but it would have remained unproductive; and that long and lasting posterity, which was promised to him by the divine oracles, was only promised upon condition that he would (*a*) lay down his life for the expiation of sin. It was to be the same with those who should believe in him, and more especially his first disciples. The death which they were to suffer for his sake would be fruitful even as his; and the astonishing multiplication which was to follow should force their astonished executioners to exclaim that the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians: a powerful motive for not fearing death, but rather desiring it, since its effects are to be so admirable. This motive is, after the glory of God, the only one which Jesus Christ had or could have had; but not so with the rest of men. With reference to them, all is at stake, inasmuch as the question is of their eternal salvation, which they secure by dying for the cause of God, and which they renounce if they refuse, when called upon, to sacrifice to him this short and miserable life. Those to whom the Saviour spoke were then more susceptible of this interested motive than of a charity as generous as his own. It is on that account that he proposes it to them, by repeating to them, on this occasion, that maxim which he had already taught them: (*b*) "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life everlasting."

To this principal reason the Saviour adds two other motives, very proper to excite their emulation and to sustain their courage. One is the example which he gives them; the other is the reward which he reserves for them. If the road be rough, he will walk before them: if the end be inconceivable glory, he will share it with them. This is what he declares to them in the following words: "If any man minister to me, let him follow me; and where I am, there also

(*a*) Isiah, liii. 10. (*b*) St. John, xii. 25.

shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor."

It may strike us that no answer could be made to the example of a God. But are excuses ever wanting to our cowardice? It might say, further, that human weakness cannot be compared to the strength of a God, and that what is easy to one is impossible to the other; that a divine model is, therefore, more to be admired than followed. Jesus Christ deprives us of even this last excuse, by making it apparent, in his person, that it was humanity, with all its weakness, that was about to be exposed to the shafts of death. At this moment, whilst he surveyed death with a steady eye, he suffered the apprehension to agitate his great soul, and to make him feel, as it were, a foretaste of the agony which he was to suffer when regarding it face to face in the garden of Olives. We see here a miniature representation of that doleful scene, in those words which express at the same time his emotion, his prayer, and his resignation: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour." Do not, therefore, spare me; and, since you must be glorified by my death, whatever it may cost me, "Father, glorify thy name."

Jesus, whom we have already heard saying to his Father, "I know that thou hearest me always," could not fail to be heard on this occasion. It is true that he could not obtain both these requests, which are contradictory, one being for death, and the other that he might not die. But the latter was only conditional; and it was not heard: the other, which was absolute, was heard, for at that instant "a voice, therefore, came from heaven: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The Father had already glorified his name by the incarnation of his Son; he was to glorify it still more by his death, and this glory was, at the same time, the glory of the Son inseparable from that of the Father. This is what was meant by that heavenly voice, whose sound produced such a startling effect, that "the multitude, therefore, that stood and heard, said that it thundered." Those who spoke thus had not distinguished the words, perhaps because they were strangers who did not understand the language of the country, in which it is very probable that the voice had spoken. Others,

who had understood the sense of them, said: "An angel spoke to him." As the Father speaks in his own name, it is more likely that the voice was immediately from himself. But it was not then necessary that the people should be made acquainted with this circumstance. Wherefore, confining himself to that which it was more important to know, "Jesus answered: This [*miraculous*] voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."

He then declares in what manner the Father and the Son are about to be glorified. "Now is [*he said*] the judgment of the world:" a judgment not of justice and of rigor, but of mercy and of grace; since in consequence, "now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (9), and the world, delivered from the oppression of its tyrant, shall fall again under the domination of its legitimate king. The manner of effecting this great revolution is that which he has already pointed out. For "I," he added, "if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself. Now this he said signifying what death he should die."

Whether the term employed was the popular expression for the punishment of the cross—whether his discourse was longer and more fully developed than we have it reported (we have already remark-

(9) The demon having become the master, or rather the tyrant of men. Man, having allowed himself to be drawn into sin by the devil, deserved to be subjected to him, according to that maxim of the apostle Saint Peter to which we have already referred: he who allows himself to be vanquished, becomes the slave of him who has vanquished. Not that Satan thereby deserved to become his master; but God had abandoned guilty man to Satan, in the same way as human justice delivers criminals to the executioners. God could deliver man from his tyranny without doing him any injustice, as the prince, when he grants a pardon to the criminal, does not wrong the executioner; but God wished that the devil should deserve to be deprived of his empire, even although he had justly acquired it. The devil has deserved this by exercising over Jesus Christ, who is the just by excellence, the right of death, which he only possessed over sinners. In consequence, God has decreed that he should forfeit all the rights which he previously held over mankind. It is this judgment passed against Satan in favor of the world, which is here termed the judgment of the world.

The devil has now no longer any more power over men than they are willing to let him assume; and those who, before the coming of Jesus Christ, emancipated themselves from his tyranny, were only enabled to do so by virtue of the retrospective virtue of the death of Jesus Christ. This explains in two words why the devil has still power over men, although his empire has been destroyed; and why, even before the destruction of his empire, some men were free from his domination.

ed that there is ground for believing that Saint John often gives no more than an abridgment of the Saviour's words); whatever be the reason, it is certain that his words were understood; for "the multitude answered him: We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, the Son of man (10) must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?"

These people spoke the truth, but not the whole truth. The death of Christ is not less clearly predicted than his temporal reign. The Holy Ghost, when he spoke to the prophets, had revealed to them his sufferings, as well as the glory which was to succeed them. But the Jews, solicitous to gather from Scripture every thing which was glorious to their Messiah, were ever unwilling to notice the humiliations so often predicted for him. It was this blindness which caused their incredulity and their reprobation. Jesus had said sufficient to them on this point, supposing they had been willing to listen to him. He did not choose to repeat it to them again. He exhorted them in a general way to profit by present grace, because they were not to have it long, and that then they were to be delivered over to their own reprobate sense. He therefore said to them: "Yet a little while the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not. He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things Jesus spoke; and he went away and hid himself from them."

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(10) These words, *the Son of man*, are not found in the discourse of the Saviour, which we have just given. However, the Jews repeat the phrase as if he had just pronounced it. A convincing proof that Saint John does not report all his words.

CHAPTER LIII.

INCREDULITY OF THE JEWS.—THE TIMID CONDEMNED WITH THE INCREDULOUS.—FROM WHENCE CAME THE BAPTISM OF JOHN.—PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS.—PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD AND THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN.

During the few days which still remained to him, Jesus retired every evening to Bethania, where he passed the night, and returned in the morning to Jerusalem. This he did, lest his enemies should anticipate the time he had marked out to be betrayed into their hands. He knew that they dared not arrest him during the day, for fear of raising an insurrection amongst that portion of the people who were attached to him. The night was more favorable to their designs; and it was, therefore, under cover of the darkness that they did lay hold of him; for once they had formed the resolution of arresting him, nothing could induce them to lay it aside. Their hatred had caused their incredulity, and their incredulity increased with their hatred. (*a*) "And whereas he had done so many miracles before them, they believed not in him, that the saying of Isaias the prophet might be fulfilled (1): Lord, who hath believed our hearing? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

(*a*) St. John, xii. 37–50.

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(1) The Jews were not incredulous because Isaias had foretold their incredulity; but Isaias had foretold that they would be incredulous because they were to be so. The same case occurs here as in prescience, which is not the cause of the events which are to occur: on the contrary, the events which are to happen are the causes of the foreknowledge. We have already noticed how it frequently occurs in Scripture that the particle *that* ("*ut*") signifies, not that one thing has been the cause of the other, but that one has occurred after the other: *hoc post hoc*, and not *hoc propter hoc*. Heretics have, notwithstanding, construed *that* ("*ut*") to the very rigor of the letter, and have maintained, consequently, that the prophecy of Isaias was the cause of the incredulity of the Jews; that, by not believing, they had insured the truth of the Divine oracles. These men had only one step more to take, viz., to assert that, by rendering this sort of service to God, they performed a laudable and meritorious work; nay, they even went beyond this step. There is no extravagance which men do not make even Scripture put forward, when they wish to explain it by private judgment, and not according to the sense of the Church.

Therefore they could not believe, because Isaias said again: He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts (2), that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaias (3), when he saw his glory, and spoke of him. However, many of the chief men also believed in him; but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him (4), that they might not be cast out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God."

The latter had but too justly merited their condemnation, which is found expressed in these last words. Their case was one of those where dissimulation is equivalent to infidelity, and where not to confess the faith is to deny it. We may remember what the Pharisees said when speaking of the Saviour: "Hath any one of the rulers believed in him?" So that, by not declaring themselves, these rulers of the nation authorized this reproach. Whereas, if they had declared themselves, who knows but the great, emboldened by many of their equals—and the lower classes, with whom the example of the great has at all times so much weight—might have declared themselves in greater numbers, and with more intrepidity? Who knows but the priests and the Pharisees, seeing the Saviour's party strength-

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(2) God does not either blind or harden directly; but he does so by withdrawing his lights and his graces. The consequence is, that man can no longer either see or hear in matters regarding his salvation; which inability is asserted by some to be an absolute impossibility, and by others, whose opinion is more generally followed, to be of extreme difficulty. We must, however, believe that the blindness and hardness of man's heart are exclusively his own fault. According to this expression of the wise man (*Wis.* ii. 21), *their own malice blinded them;* and that of Saint Augustin, *God doth not abandon unless he be abandoned.*

(3) These words are read in the sixth chapter of Isaias. We find in the same chapter the wondrous vision which this prophet had. He not only saw therein the Divine Essence, but the Trinity of persons was also revealed to him, because it is here stated that he saw the glory of the Son; and Saint Paul (Acts, xxviii.) makes the Holy Ghost address to him the words which we have just read. No text proves more clearly than this the Divinity of the Saviour; for it is said on one side that Isaias saw his glory, and on the other hand we read in Isaias the whole glory which this prophet saw—"the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated, and the Seraphim cried one to another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of Hosts; and the earth is full of his glory."

(4) With reference to the obligation of externally professing the religion of which we approve in our heart, see note 1, Part I. chap. xxvii. p. 210.

ened by the number and by the quality of his disciples, would have abandoned the design of destroying him, from the little probability they would have had of success? Who knows even but the mass of the nation would at last have acknowledged its Messiah, and thereby prevented its own ruin and reprobation? What crimes and disasters could not these chief men have prevented, if they had not allowed themselves to be governed by a cowardly human respect? Hence let no one be surprised at finding here their condemnation, and learning that their eternal lot shall be in "the pool burning with fire and brimstone," where Saint John places "the fearful" along with the "unbelieving" (Apoc. xxi. 8).

Yet, in order to let them know how very unreasonable was this criminal timidity, and, moreover, to give them an example of courage, "Jesus raising his voice, cried and said: He that believeth in me doth not believe in me (5), but in him that sent me." Wherefore, then, blush to believe, since no one is ashamed to believe in God, and this act is tantamount to so believing. But this reason was much more forcible with regard to Jesus Christ than any of the other ambassadors of God. The latter were, in point of fact, only messengers, whom men were, notwithstanding, bound to believe as they would God himself, when these envoys had proved by miracles the truth of their mission. But Jesus Christ being of the same nature as God, to believe in him was believing in God himself, and not merely a man who spoke in the name and on the part of God. This is the meaning of that short expression which the Saviour immediately added: "And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me (6)."

He afterwards says: "I am come a light unto the world, that whosoever believeth in me may not remain in darkness;" that is to say, in order that he may be enlightened, for so this expression is commonly understood. But here, where the Saviour instructs those

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(5) Doth not believe in me *alone*. This fashion of speech is much used in the sacred language.

(6) He seeth the Father when he seeth Jesus Christ, because he seeth him who has the Divine nature, which is common to him with the Father. He did not see Divinity itself, which is, of course, imperceptible to the eyes of the body; but he saw him who is God, and who is one and the same with God.

who feared to allow their faith to become manifest, does he not also wish to make them sensible of the natural opposition existing between this luminous faith which they have received, and the darkness with which they were anxious to cover it?

The remainder of the discourse regards the incredulous. "If any man," said Jesus to them, "hear my words, and keep them not, I do not judge him; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that despiseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken (7), the same shall judge him on the last day, for I have not spoken of myself; but the Father who sent me, he gave me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak, and I know that his commandment is life everlasting. The things, therefore, that I speak even as the Father said unto me, so do I speak."

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(7) It is here said that the Word shall judge, as we say sometimes that the law condemns. It is easy to understand that it is not the law which pronounces the sentence; but it dictates it, as it were, by declaring that such an action is worthy of, or shall be punished with, such a penalty. It is like the major proposition of a syllogism, to which the judge, after the information, subjoins the minor: such a man has committed this act. Whence this consequence necessarily follows: this man has incurred such a penalty. Thus, this expression of the Saviour, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him; far from excluding the person of the judge, supposes it on the contrary, because there could be no judgment if there were not, besides the law, some person to apply it to such an act and to such a party. This Word which shall judge the unbelieving Jews is the preaching of Jesus Christ, inasmuch as it was accompanied by miracles which confirmed its truth. These miracles, proving as they do that this preaching is from God, shall equally prove that those who have rejected it have resisted God himself; such is the signification of the Saviour's entire discourse.

This same word shall also judge those who have had faith, but who have, nevertheless, sinned against the moral precepts. The voluptuous shall be judged by the following: whosoever shall look on a woman, to lust after her, hath already committed adultery in his heart; and the vindictive by this other: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. The avaricious shall be judged by this short and comprehensive precept: you cannot serve God and mammon; and if they have failed in charity towards the poor, the following shall also be set forth against them: the good which you have failed to perform towards the least of my brethren, you have failed to perform towards me. The ambitious shall be confounded by these words: if you do not become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven; and to those who are abusive in their language, these words shall be repeated: whoever shall say to his brother, thou fool! shall be in danger of hell-fire. Let each one, therefore, judge himself now by these words, for the heavens and the earth shall pass away, but these words shall not pass away.

Still his enemies sought incessantly to quarrel with him; and as they could detect nothing reprehensible in his actions, unless perhaps that they were too virtuous, they sought to find fault with him on the subject of his mission. (*a*) "On one of the days" which elapsed between his entry into Jerusalem and his passion, "as he was teaching the people in the temple, and preaching the Gospel, the chief priests and the scribes, with the ancients, met together, and spoke to him, saying: Tell us by what authority dost thou these things? or who is he that hath given thee this authority?"

He had so often said that he acted in the name of his Father, that they ought no longer to have feigned ignorance on that head. Moreover, it was so evident that he who gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead, must have spoken and acted in the name of God alone, that nothing was more unreasonable than to ask him such a question. They were, therefore, unworthy of receiving an answer. Such is the meaning of the question which the Saviour put to them, which, at the same time that it confounded them, placed before their eyes another proof of the divinity of his mission, to which it is very likely that they then paid no attention. (*b*) He, "answering, said to them: I will also ask you one word, which if you shall tell me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven, or from men? Answer me. But they thought within themselves, saying: If we say from heaven, he will say to us: Why, then, did you not believe him? But if we shall say from men, we are afraid of the people; the whole people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet. [*Therefore*] answering Jesus, they said: We know not whence it was (8). And Jesus said to them: Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things (9)."

(*a*) St. Luke, xx. 1, 2.
(*b*) St. Luke, xx. 3–8; St. Matthew, xxi. 24–26; St. Mark, xi. 30–33.

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(8) They were forced to give this answer, if they did not choose to retract, or to run the risk of being stoned. Nothing but extreme necessity can make learned doctors say: *We know not.*

(9) He would have told it, if they had answered with sincerity; but we have seen that the answer which they gave was not the true one, but such as they thought best calculated to lead them out of the difficulty; its truth or falsehood concerned them but

At bottom, they were persuaded that the mission of John was divine; for the word "baptism" comprises here the entire mission of John, designated by its most remarkable constituent. They did not, therefore, any more than the people, entertain a doubt but that John was a prophet; but they had refused to listen to him, because of their inordinate pride. These proud men could not endure other teachers than themselves in Israel, and this also was the reason of their implacable enmity towards the Saviour. But their corruption was a still greater cause of their indocility. They were very willing to be devout, provided that it interfered not with their interest or their passions. Numberless prayers and observances, with little or no morality, this was the whole of their religion. Now, John the Baptist, who unceasingly laid before their eyes the principal duties of justice and of charity, and required that they who had failed in their performance should justify themselves by the confession of their crimes and by a public profession of penance—a preacher of this character could not be favorably heard by them. But what other inference could be drawn from this, except that they were audacious hypocrites, who were equally regardless of God and of man, more wicked than declared sinners, because they added falsehood to malice; and more incorrigible, because, whilst setting themselves forward as just men, they were very far from acknowledging that they were sinners? Hence Jesus Christ had but too much reason for addressing them in the following manner, continuing what he had been saying:

(*a*) "But what think you?" said he to them, in order to render them attentive, and because he wished to draw their condemnation from their own lips. "A certain man had two sons; and coming to the first, he said: Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answering, said: I will not; but afterwards being moved with repentance, he went. And coming to the other, the father said in like manner. He answering, said: I go, sir; and he went not. Which of the two

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxi. 28–32.

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little. An habitual disposition to frame our language so as to redound to our own advantage, without regard to truth, is, even when we do speak the truth, defiling ourselves with the guilt of falsehood.

did the father's will? They say to him: The first (10);" not understanding as yet the drift of the Saviour's words. Thereupon "Jesus saith to them: Amen, I say to you, that the publicans (11) and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of justice, and you did not believe him; but the publicans and harlots believed him: but you, seeing it, do not even afterwards repent, that you might believe him."

But, not content with having rejected the precursor of the Messiah, they had come to the resolution (and were on the point of carrying it out) to make away with the Messiah himself. The preceding parable was meant to reproach them with the first of these two crimes; the following is meant to set before their eyes all the horror of the second crime, and the fearful chastisements which it must necessarily entail upon them. The Saviour had hitherto addressed himself to the chief priests and scribes only, because it was they alone, generally speaking, who had been indocile to the preaching of John. But the multitude was also to be involved in the crime of his death. Hence it was that, directing his discourse to the whole of his auditory, (*a*) "he began to speak this parable: A certain householder planted a vineyard (12). [*He*] made a hedge round about it, and

(*a*) St. Luke, xx. 9, 11, 13–15; St. Matthew, xxi. 33, 34–40; St. Mark, xii. 6.

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(10) God, who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust (Psalms, c. iv.), easily forgives the first moment of resistance, when at the second moment, which is that of reflection, we acknowledge our fault, and return to our duty.

(11) An extraordinary profession of piety seems like saying to God that one is disposed to do all that he wishes: a scandalous profession of libertinism seems to say to him, on the contrary, that the individual has shaken off his yoke, and is resolved to obey him no longer. It is in this sense that the publicans are represented by the first of the two sons, and the Pharisees by the second. The first, from the moment when he repented, becomes better than the second, and the second was already worse than the first, if, at the time when he respectfully promised to obey, he was already disposed to do nothing of the kind.

(12) God is the householder; the synagogue is the vineyard. Several mystical meanings are given to the hedge, the press, and the tower. It is very probable that Jesus Christ only wished to convey that God had spared nothing which was necessary, in order that his vineyard should fructify, according to this expression of Isaias: *What could I do with my vineyard*, that I have not done to it? The outraged and massacred servants are the prophets down to John the Baptist, inclusive. Jesus Christ is the Son who is here stated to have been put to death outside of the vineyard, that is to say, out-

dug in it a press, and built a tower. [*He*] let it out to husbandmen, and went abroad into a strange country for a long time. At the season when the time of the fruits drew nigh, he sent to the husbandmen a servant to receive of the husbandmen of the fruits of the vineyard; who, having laid hands upon him, beat him, and sent him away empty. Again he sent another servant, and they beat him also, and stoned him, and they wounded him in the head, and, treating him reproachfully, sent him away empty. And again he sent the third, and they wounded him also, and cast him out, and him they killed. Again he sent other servants, more than the former, of whom some they beat and others they killed. Then the lord of the vineyard said: What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be (13), when they see him, they will reverence him. Therefore, having yet one son, most dear to him, he also sent him to them last of all, saying: They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen seeing the son, they thought within themselves, saying one to the other: This is the heir; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So, casting him out of the vineyard, they killed him. When, therefore, the lord of the vineyard shall come, what shall he do to these husbandmen? They say to him: He will bring these evil men to an evil end, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that they shall render him the fruit in due season."

Thus, without knowing it, they pronounced the sentence of their own condemnation. As they still did not perceive that the matter concerned themselves, they gave way to that natural sense of equity which is felt by all men when they have no interest in being unjust. But Jesus, taking up their decision, said: (*a*) "He will come and will destroy *those* husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others." The manner in which he pronounced these words made

(*a*) St. Mark, xii. 9; St. Luke, xx. 16, 17; St. Matthew, xxi. 42–46.

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side the inclosure of the walls of Jerusalem, in order that this circumstance of his passion should be found to have been foretold like the others.

(13) This man said *it may be*, because a man is ignorant of what may occur to him. When God says so, it is not from ignorance: he merely expresses the possibility, founded on the free-will of man, who may or may not do so. See note 4, page 63, chap. ix. Part I.

them at last sensible that they were merely a confirmation of the sentence which they had pronounced against themselves, and speaking in the sudden fear with which they were seized, "God forbid! they hearing, said to him. But he looking on them, said: What is this, then, that is written? Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected (14), the same is become the head of the corner (15)? By the Lord has this been done (16), and it is wonderful in our eyes."

It is well understood, even if He had not expressly said so, that he was the corner-stone which, blinded by their malice, these ignorant builders rejected. "Therefore," he presently added, "I say unto you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you (17), and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof. Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder (18). When the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they knew that he spoke of them, and seeking to lay hands on him, they feared the people, because they held him as a prophet."

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(14) These words are taken from the 117th Psalm. Even the Jews understood them as having reference to the Messiah; this is the reason why they can make no answer.

(15) Jesus is elsewhere styled the foundation-stone. He is also termed the key of the arch. He is, in point of fact, all that is signified by these different expressions. Here he is the corner-stone, because he joins two walls previously divided, making of the two but one single edifice, viz., he combines the two people, Jew and Gentile, so that they are but one and the same people.

(16) Rejected by men, this stone is placed by the hand of God. The heavenly Jerusalem shall be built almost entirely of the stones which are the refuse of the world—the disciples who follow their Master.

(17) Heaven and the Church are styled in Scripture the kingdom of God. It is taken in both these senses from the fall of the Synagogue; the Synagogue is no longer the true Church which gives children to God, and heaven is irrevocably closed against it.

(18) Those who strike against a large stone do not hurt the stone; they hurt themselves; if this stone falls from above on any one, it crushes him. The Jews, by their opposition to Jesus Christ, have not injured him, but themselves alone; for they have injured themselves in their spiritual welfare, since they have deserved to be no longer the people of God, and in their temporal welfare, by the frightful calamities which were the effect and the chastisement of their crime. Behold them already bruised by the stone; but on the last day, when Jesus Christ shall pronounce against them the sentence of eternal reprobation, then it is that the stone shall fall upon them with its whole weight, and crush them into powder.

CHAPTER LIV.

PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE FEAST.—OBLIGATION OF PAYING THE TRIBUTE.—THE RESURRECTION PROVED.—THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF THE LAW IS, THE LOVE OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR.—THE MESSIAH IS THE SON OF DAVID, AND YET HIS LORD.

THE actual dispositions of the rulers of the Jewish nation, the crime which they meditated and which they were on the point of perpetrating, and the vengeance which the Lord was subsequently to wreak upon them, constitute the principal part of what the reader has just perused. The sequel contains the history of what was to occur immediately after the Saviour's death. We here see his Gospel preached, and once more rejected by the Jews, whether in consequence of their ancient prejudices, or from an excessive attachment to the goods of the earth, from which those who obey his law must be entirely detached. Several of his ministers are cruelly put to death: others, called the Gentiles (who are sent in place of the first), throng in crowds to form for Jesus Christ a Church so numerous and so flourishing that it indemnifies him a hundred times over for the loss of the obdurate Synagogue. But, lest these new-comers might fancy that, by recognizing him for the Messiah, they had finally secured their salvation, he introduced, by way of episode, the parable of a man who had not the nuptial robe, in order to teach them that faith alone does not save, and that they might expect to be condemned with the incredulous, if they did not take care to preserve the innocence which they received in baptism, or if, after having lost it, they do not regain it by sincere repentance. (*a*) "Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like to a man being a king (1), who made a marriage for his

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxii. 1–14.

(1) The parable of the great supper, which we have already seen, page 327, Part II., bears so close a resemblance to this, that some have thought, and with great probability, that it was the same parable spoken but once by the Saviour, and related by two evangelists, with the same circumstances, more or less varied. Without going into detail, we

son (2); and he sent his servants to call them that were invited to the marriage; and they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying: Tell them that were invited: Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my beeves and fatlings are killed. All things are ready: come ye to the wedding. But they neglected, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. And the rest laid hands on his servants, and having treated them contumeliously, put them to death. When the king had heard of it, he was angry, and sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city. Then he saith to his servants: The wedding indeed is ready; but they that were invited were not worthy; go ye, therefore, into the highways, and as many as you shall find, invite to the wedding. His servants going out into the highways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good, and the wedding was filled with guests. The king went in to see the guests; he saw there a man who had not on a wedding-garment; and he saith to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? But he was silent (3). Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

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agree that these circumstances are not in reality essential; that in point of fact the substance is the same; that the sense of the two parables is also the same, inasmuch as, on both sides, it is evidently the Church formed of Gentiles after the obstinate refusal of the Jews to enter into it. However, it appears certain that Jesus Christ spoke them at different times and in different places, and it is highly probable that the two parables were marked, when he uttered them, by the same difference which we find them to have in the sacred writers.

(2) God is the king, Jesus Christ is the bridegroom, and the Church is his spouse. The servants are the preachers of the Gospel. The guests first invited are the Jews, as we have said; and the second are the Gentiles, who embrace the faith. They are the principal portion of the Church, which is the consort; but they only compose it collectively; and, taken separately, they do not constitute a necessary part, because there is not one amongst them which the Church may not lose without ceasing to be the Church. Witness the man who had not the nuptial garment, whose expulsion deprived the Church of none of her integrity.

(3) If he be silent, how can he justify himself? if his hands are tied, how can he resist? and if his feet are also tied, how can he escape by flight? This is said in order to make manifest the inevitable effect of God's judgments; for, in short, there can be only three ways of securing one's self—apology, resistance, or flight.

But (*a*) "then the Pharisees," who could not now prevail by force, had recourse to artifice: "going, [*they*] consulted amongst themselves how to ensnare him in his speech. And being upon the watch, they sent spies, who should feign themselves just." These emissaries were "some of the Pharisees, and their disciples with the Herodians." We have said that this was in order to ensnare him in his speech, "that they might deliver him up to the authority and power of the governor." Seeing in him but an ordinary man, they held out to him the only lure by which all men are caught, which is that of praise; and as they seemed to desire that he would speak to them frankly and freely, they affected to praise him more especially for his freedom and his candor. "Who coming, say to him: Master, we know that thou art a true speaker, and carest not for any man. For thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth (4). Tell us, therefore, what dost thou think, is it lawful to give tribute to Cesar, or not?"

The question was as captious as it could possibly be; for he must either have answered yes or no, supposing that he wished to give any answer; and whatever way he answered, the snare appeared inevitable. If he authorized the tribute, besides that he could no longer give himself out to be the Messiah, who, according to the common belief, was to emancipate the nation from every species of slavery, they might also avail themselves of his reply in order to render him odious to the people, who held this tribute in horror. Or, if he denied the obligation of paying it, they would then denounce him at once to the governor, who would cause him to be punished as a rebel. The trick was, therefore, skilfully devised. But of what avail is subtlety against truth, and trickery against wisdom? (*b*) "Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the coin of the tribute. They

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxii. 15; St. Luke, xx. 20; St. Mark, xii. 13.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xxii. 18–21.

(4) This testimony which they rendered to Jesus Christ was true, and, therefore, honorable to him. If given by well-meaning persons, it would have deserved acknowledgment and reward from the Saviour; but being thus spoken, it was as criminal as the blackest calumny could have been. We here see what a difference the intention makes in the same action.

offered him a penny. Jesus saith to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to him: Cesar's. Then he saith to them. Render, therefore, to Cesar the things that are Cesar's; and to God, the things that are God's (5)."

This reply is unanswerable. For since the current coin of the country was stamped with Cesar's image, they therefore acknowledged Cesar for their sovereign, and were consequently bound to pay him tribute. To contest this would be acting in contradiction to themselves. On the other hand, if they had pretended that the domination of Cesar was a yoke imposed by force, and which they had a right to shake off at any time if they found themselves able, they themselves would thereby avow those rebellious principles which were really cherished in their hearts, and they would find themselves caught in a snare which they had laid for the Saviour. They remained, therefore, confused and silent, for (*a*) "they could not reprehend his word before the people," nor yet before the governor: "and hearing this, they wondered, and leaving him, went their ways."

It seems that after this victory they ventured not again to engage in dispute with him. Nevertheless, though the Pharisees were silenced, there were others who still had the temerity to address him. The intention of the latter, however, was not so perverse as that of the former. They were not seeking to ruin the Saviour, as it is easy to see by the question which they put to him. What, then, was their object? To puzzle him, who answered so adroitly the most subtle and most artful questions. There is every reason for thinking that such was their design; and their hope of succeeding therein was founded upon the difficulty of the problem which they had to propose to him. They deemed this problem unanswerable, and no man,

(*a*) St. Luke, xx. 26; St. Matthew, xxii. 22.

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(5) Since God is willing to make the tribute a matter of religion, Cesar, therefore, acts only in like manner towards God, when he makes the service of God an affair of State.

Cesar cannot say that God exacts too much from him, when he requires this return; for, after all, God is God, and Cesar is man.

We understand by Cesar all secular powers, and by the tribute all the duties which inferiors owe to them.

in their opinion, could find a clue to it. Thenceforward the acknowledged wisdom of him whom they were going to puzzle would only serve to accredit their system, and to increase their triumph. However, this was exceedingly frivolous, as are all the reasonings of libertinism, for these people were declared free-thinkers, decided materialists; they were, in a word, (*a*) "Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, who came to him that day, and asked him: Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die having a wife, and he leave no children (6), his brother should take her to wife, and raise up issue to his brother. There were, therefore, seven brethren; and the first took a wife and died, leaving no issue. The second took her to wife, and he also died childless. The third, in like manner, took her; and so on to the seventh, and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman also died. At the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise again, whose wife of the seven shall she be? for all the seven had her to wife."

The difficulty was, in reality, the same for two as for seven; but the embarrassment arising from the seven husbands seemed to render the resurrection more ridiculous, and we know what strength ridicule gives to objections of this kind. (*b*) "Jesus answering, saith to them [*gravely*]: Do ye not, therefore, err, because ye know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God? For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven (7). The children of this world marry and are given in

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxii. 23, 24; St. Luke, xx. 28–32; St. Mark, xii. 23.
(*b*) St. Mark, xii. 24, 25; St. Matthew, xxii. 30; St. Luke, xx. 34–36.

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(6) See Deuteronomy, xxv. 5. Brothers alone are there spoken of; but we see by the example of Booz that, when there were no surviving brothers, this law obliged the next of kin to marry the widow of the man who died without children, and, upon his refusal, the next in rotation to him. Before God had made it an express law, this custom was already established in the family of the patriarchs, and appears to have obtained therein the force of law, as we are further informed by the history of the detestable children of Judas, Her and Onan.

(7) That is to say, that they shall be pure as they are, unless a person should prefer to say that they shall be virgins like them: it is only in this point of view that they are here compared to angels; for they shall have bodies, and the angels shall not have them. The angels have no sensible pleasures, and they shall have them. True it is, that these bodies shall have spiritual qualities, agility, subtilty, incorruptibility, but all this shall not

marriage; but they that shall be accounted worthy of that world, and of the resurrection from the dead, shall neither be married nor take wives. Neither can they die any more, for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

This last expression contains a very profound meaning. The life received is similar to that of those who confer it. Mortal and corruptible parents confer a life mortal and corruptible like their own. God, the immediate author of the life which men shall receive by the resurrection, shall bestow an incorruptible and immortal life like unto his own. Wherefore they shall die no more, because, being children of the resurrection, they shall be the children of God. Thenceforth marriage is no longer to exist, for it was established to repair the work of death, and its fruitfulness is a substitute for immortality. The angels who are immortal do not marry; neither shall men marry, when they have become immortal like them, and that for a similar reason; such are the reasons which the Saviour here advances, when, taking advantage of this occasion, he refines the idea which we should entertain of future felicity. In what wanton images would not human corruption have revelled, if it had been abandoned, on this point, to itself! we may judge of this from the Paradise of Mahomet.

The resurrection remains still to be proved. Jesus proves it by Scripture, because it was by Scripture that the Sadducees had attacked it; and as these heretics recognized only the five books of Moses, he takes from Exodus the text wherewith he is going to oppose them. He therefore continues thus: (*a*) "Concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read in the books of Moses how in the bush God spoke to him, saying: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the

(*a*) St. Mark, xii. 26, 27; St. Luke, xx. 38–40; St. Matthew, xxii. 31, 32.

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hinder them from being real bodies; and the perfect purity of the pleasures will not in any way prevent them from being truly sensible pleasures. We have no knowledge of these pleasures, and it would be impossible for us to imagine them; but our ignorance on this point should not prevent us from believing that after the resurrection there must be sensible pleasures for the elect, because it is universally admitted that the reprobate are to endure sensible pains

dead (8), but of the living; for all live to him. You, therefore, do greatly err," he said to them once more. "And some of the scribes answering, said to him: Master, thou hast said well; and the multi-

(8) Therefore Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob exist; for God is not the God of nothing. It is in this that the whole force of this reasoning seems to lie; therefore they shall one day rise again. This second consequence, which is what Jesus Christ had to prove against the Sadducees, does not appear so necessarily connected with the principle as the first. For, inasmuch as God is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, we may then conclude that these three patriarchs exist as souls, and that their souls have not been annihilated by death; but it does not follow that, when once separated from their bodies, they should one day be reunited to these bodies, since there was nothing to hinder God from making this separation eternal. The answer we give to this is, that the Saviour's reasoning was peremptory against the Sadducees, who did not acknowledge any spiritual substance, and who started from this assumption when they proceeded to deny the resurrection, because, according to them, the soul no longer existing, there was no longer any thing which could be united to the bodies, whence they concluded that the resurrection was a thing impossible. In this their reasoning was false; for, supposing that man was merely a pure machine, God could still raise up that fallen and broken machine, and restore it to its primitive state. The resurrection was not, therefore, impossible, even according to their own principle. However, Jesus Christ only applies himself to deprive them of this principle, because, once deprived of it, they had no other on which to ground the consequence which they drew from this erroneous assumption; and this is the reason why they remained silent. Yet, although speaking with metaphysical precision, the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body do not appear to depend necessarily one upon the other, still they did then so depend, according to the idea adopted by the entire world, and the second was inferred from the first. This was the manner of reasoning pursued at that time; and it is that of Saint Paul, who proves the resurrection by a series of reasoning which only appears to tend towards proving the immortality of the soul. He knew that, having once admitted this truth, people would not pause to cavil at the resurrection, which appeared to be a necessary consequence, or, at least, to be no longer open to any real objections. Therefore these frivolous objections were not started at that time, and they, indeed, are not more valid than the ridiculous problem of the Sadducees. How reanimate these withered bones? How collect ashes dispersed over all parts of the earth? And besides, if men eat one another, as the cannibals do, or if the substance of the dead passes into that of the living, through the dead bodies which serve to fertilize the earth, how classify all those portions of bodies which are commingled one with another? Shall this body have too much, or that other body too little? These difficulties all revert to this reasoning: I, who am a weak, blind, impotent creature, could never get clear of the difficulties which such a state of things seems to present; so neither can God do it, though he is infinite in wisdom and in power. In restoring to us at the resurrection the same body which we shall have had, God will not restore to us all the matter which shall have constituted a part of this body during the whole course of our life; this truth, if we study it a little, will furnish an answer to all the difficulties which are raised against the possibility of the resurrection.

tudes hearing it, were in admiration with his doctrine, and after that they durst not ask him any more questions."

This seems to allude to the Sadducees, who could make him no reply; or, if we wish to understand it as having reference to the Pharisees, we must take it that they ceased for the moment to interrogate the Saviour, but that they resumed their cavilling very soon after. For these latter, (*a*) "hearing that he had silenced the Sadducees, came together; and one of them, a doctor of the law, that had heard them reasoning together, seeing that Jesus had answered them well, asked him: Master, which is the great commandment, the first commandment of all?" It is added that he put this question, "tempting him." Did they then suspect him of making light of the great precept of the love of God? and did they hope to find in his answer the means of calumniating him on this head? The approbation which the Son of God gave to this man prevents us from attributing to him such perverse intentions; and if it be said that he sought to tempt him, it would seem as if this meant to convey that he sought to test his wisdom; that is to say, there was more incredulity than malice in him. (*b*) "Jesus answered him: The first commandment of all is, Hear, O Israel! the Lord thy God is one God; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength (9). This is the greatest and the first commandment. And

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxii. 34–36; St. Mark, xii. 28.

(*b*) St. Mark, xii. 29–34; St. Matthew, xxii. 38–40.

Supposing that a man begins *to-day* to eat another man's body, and that he eats it, if it were possible, even to the very bones—supposing, then, that God should raise him up with the same body which he had *yesterday;* in this case the man shall be resuscitated with the same body which he had during his life, and in this body there will not be an atom of that other body, though the substance thereof shall have passed wholly and entirely into his.

(9) See what has been said with reference to the word of God and the love of our neighbor, in notes 12 and 13 of page 299 of this Part. It still remains to be explained why it is said that the commandment of the love of our neighbor is like to that of the love of God, although the latter be the first and the greatest of all. The question here is not concerning natural affection, which is always inferior, and very often contrary to the love of God. The only question raised here is with reference to the love of charity, by which an individual loves his neighbor in God, and for God. I love him because he is not only the work and the image of God, but the child of God; because he is the

the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets. The Scribe said to him: Well, Master, thou hast said in truth that there is one God, and there is no other besides him; that he should be loved with the whole heart, with the whole understanding, with the whole soul, and with the whole strength; and to love one's neighbor as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices. Jesus, seeing that he had answered wisely, said to him: Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

After having satisfied all their demands, the Saviour wished to question them in his turn, and to display before their eyes one of those flashes of light, whose dazzling radiance manifested his divinity through the thick cloud of his humanity. (*a*) "The Pharisees being gathered together, Jesus asked them: What think you of Christ? Whose Son is he? They said to him: David's. Whereupon he answering, said, teaching in the temple: How do the Scribes say that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself saith, by the Holy Ghost, in the Book of Psalms: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool. David, therefore, calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his Son (10)?

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxii. 41–46; St. Mark, xii. 35–37; St. Luke, xx. 42.

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brother of Jesus Christ—the living member of that adorable head—the son of his grief, and the fruit of his blood—called to share eternally with him his throne and his felicity. Now it is easy to see that, whilst loving my neighbor from these motives, it is God and Jesus Christ that I love in his person. It is this which induced theologians to say that the virtue of charity, which makes us love God for God, is the same which makes us love our neighbor for God; and in the same way as the love of God is a theological, that is to say, a divine virtue, proposing God for its object, so likewise charity towards our neighbor is also a theological and divine virtue, inasmuch as it is God whom we love in our neighbor.

God has so much love for men, that he says to each of us: Love them on my account, and I shall make no difference, either as to merit or as to recompense, between the love which you shall entertain towards them and that which you shall entertain towards myself.

If God should say to us: Love them for their own sake, it seems that hatred might sometimes be just and reasonable; but God removes from this passion every reasonable and equitable pretext, when he says to us: Love them for my sake.

(10) He does not deny that he is the Son of David; but he declares that he is some-

And no man was able to answer him a word. Neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions; and a great multitude heard him gladly."

CHAPTER LV.

TO HEAR THE DOCTORS OF THE LAW, NOT TO IMITATE THEM.—THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES ARE CURSED.—THE WIDOW'S MITE.—THE RUIN OF THE TEMPLE FORETOLD.—QUESTION AS TO THE TIME OF THE RUIN OF JERUSALEM, AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD.

THE censors were to be censured in their turn. Jesus Christ, before leaving the earth, wished to make them thoroughly known to themselves and to others; to themselves for the purpose of converting them, supposing that at the sight of their own vices, laid bare before their eyes, they might yet be struck with remorse; and to others, supposing that these censors should not be converted, yet for the purpose of arresting the progress of seduction, by unmasking the seducers. But, inasmuch as these perverse men were still the ordinary interpreters of the Mosaic law—in order to preserve to them the authority which they should have on this account over the

thing more. David certainly calls him God when he calls him his Lord—royal power acknowledging no other Lord than God. It is apparently for this reason that Jesus Christ only quotes this passage of the Psalm in proof of his divinity. All the other characters which served to prove his divinity are to be found concentrated in this Psalm: his generation from the bosom of his Father—a proof of his consubstantiality; his sitting at his right hand—a mark of equality; his existence anterior to all the stars—which expresses his eternity; his absolute empire over all kings and over all people—which belongs to the Divinity alone. We see here, moreover, his quality—of Eternal Priest, according to the order of Melchisedech—of supreme and universal Judge—of Conqueror of all his enemies, who lie crushed beneath his feet; lastly, his sufferings, by which it was said that he should enter into his glory. We should observe that the question here is of the Messiah alone. We must not seek here for mere types, for Jesus Christ formally excludes them all, and refutes beforehand all those who have since professed to discover them throughout all this Psalm. The modern Jews will no longer have it that the Messiah is the object of this divine Psalm. Their fathers, and especially those who lived in the time of Jesus Christ, never entertained a doubt on the subject.

minds of the people, the Saviour took the precaution to point out beforehand the distinction which should be made between actions and instructions, between the chair and him who sits therein. (*a*) "Then Jesus spoke to the multitude and to his disciples, and said to them in his doctrine: The Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not, for they say and do not. They bind insupportable burdens and lay them on men's shoulders; but with a finger of their own they will not move them. And all their works they do for to be seen of men. For they make phylacteries (1) broad, and enlarge their fringes. They love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market-place, and to be called by men, Rabbi. Who devour the houses of widows under the pretence of long prayer. These shall receive greater judgment, but be not you," added the Divine Master, then directing his discourse to the disciples alone, "be not you called Rabbi; for one is your master, and all you are brethren. And call none your father upon earth; for one is your father who is in heaven; neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, Christ."

This does not mean to convey that the Saviour here prohibits those titles which have been always in use, without any one ever thinking of being scandalized at them. But he wishes that, whilst we recognize fathers and masters upon earth, we should at the same time elevate our thoughts to the Father, by excellence, from whom comes all paternity in heaven and on earth, and to the first of all

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxiii. 1–10; St. Mark, xi. 38.

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(1) This is a Greek word. Here is the way that we find the phylacteries described in the Notes of Richard Simon on the New Testament: "The phylacteries are made in order to preserve four sentences extracted from the law. These sentences were written upon parchment, and inclosed in black calf-skin, in a little square form, and this little square is between two strings, to which it is attached. When the Jews say their prayers, they bind their head with these strings, so that the square which is in the middle falls right down upon the forehead, hanging a little over the bridge of the nose; these are the phylacteries of the head: they also fix similar ones to the bend of the left arm. The Pharisees, in order to appear persons of greater worth, affected to have the phylacteries broader and larger than the other Jews."

masters, from whom proceedeth all light and all knowledge. For masters here below are but faint images of him, incapable of instructing us by themselves, and can only do it in a salutary way when they faithfully repeat the things which they have learned from him. This part of the instruction regards the common people; but it also had for its main object to warn the disciples beforehand against pharisaical pride, which ambitiously seeks these honorary titles, and takes pleasure therein. This is the reason why the Saviour concludes the instruction by these words: (*a*) "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant; and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Then returning to the Pharisees, from whom he had been withdrawn by this brief digression, he went on to add fresh reproaches to those which he had already heaped upon them, and forms from the whole, as it were, a cloud of anathemas, wherewith he is going to crush them in these tremendous words: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men. For you yourselves do not enter in, and those that are going in you suffer not to enter (2). Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you devour the houses of widows (3), praying long prayers. For this ye shall receive the greater judgment. Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves (4). Woe to you, blind guides, who say: Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but he that shall swear by the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxiii. 11–39.

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(2) See note 8, page 307, Part II.

(3) Why the widows more than any other women? Because they are usually more given to piety, and they are the mistresses of their own property. We see that the hypocrites have a fine opportunity here.

(4) It seems that the masters are more culpable than the disciples, and that a greater punishment is due to them. Yes, if the disciples do not become masters in their turn, which causes equality of malice in both parties, but very soon the disciples surpass the masters, because, in order to secure to themselves the merit of invention, they add additional dogmas to those which they have received, and they thus become worse than their masters.

gold of the temple is a debtor. Ye foolish and blind; for whether is it greater, the gold, or the temple which sanctifieth the gold (5)? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift upon it, is a debtor. Ye blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? He, therefore, that sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things that are upon it; whosoever shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth in it; and he that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you tithe mint, and anise, and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the law; judgment, and mercy, and faith. These things you ought to have done, and not leave those undone (6). Blind guides, you strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but within you are full of extortion and uncleanness. Thou blind Pharisee, first make clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, that the outside may become clean. Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you are like the whited sepulchres (7), which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all filthiness. So you also outwardly, indeed, appear to men just; but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who build the sepulchres of the prophets, and adorn the monuments of the just, and say: If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves (8), that you are the sons of them who killed the prophets. Fill ye up, then, the measure of

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(5) Many Pharisees belonged to the sacerdotal order; now amongst the oaths which were obligatory, some were profitable to the priests, and there were others from which they derived no advantage. This single difference constituted, according to the decisions of these worthy men, the whole difference between serious oaths and those which were of minor consequence.

(6) See page 305, Part II., and note 3, connected with the same passage.

(7) See page 305, Part II.

(8) See page 305, Part II.

your fathers. You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of hell? Therefore behold, I send to you prophets, and wise men, and Scribes; and some of them you will put to death, and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just (9), even unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias (10), whom you killed between the temple and the altar. Amen, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not. Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall not see me henceforth till you say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

After a discourse so long and so vehement, the Saviour, who condescended to feel fatigued, had need of some short repose. But his repose was not less useful than his labor. (*a*) "And Jesus, sitting over against the treasury, beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; many that were rich cast in much; there came a certain poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing." A thing so trifling in appearance furnished the occasion for one of the most sublime instructions contained in the Gospel. "Calling his disciples together, he saith to them: Amen, I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole living." Men, whose wants are great, only value great things. God, who is in want of nothing, values only greatness of heart. In the offerings which we make to

(*a*) St. Mark, xii. 41–44.

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(9) See note 7, page 307, Part II.

(10) We find in Scripture one Zacharias killed between the temple and the altar, but he was the son of Joiada; we find another, the son of Barachias; but in his time, says Saint Jerome, the ruins of the temple were scarcely visible. The most common opinion is, that he who is referred to here is the first, whose father, Joiada, had also the name of Barachias.

him, he regards not the hand, but the heart; and if the heart be generous, the smallest gift acquires in his sight the value of a rich treasure. Let not, therefore, the rich man pride himself because of his great donations; they may be given without any high degree of merit, and with but small generosity; and let not the poor man think himself deprived of the merit of giving because he has little to give. In giving all that he has, he gives much more than he who, whilst he gives much, still reserves for himself more than he gives. The reason of this is explained by the Saviour: it costs but little to give from a person's superfluity; but to deprive himself of what is necessary can only proceed from unlimited generosity.

The Saviour, before he gave this instruction to his disciples, had foretold to the Jews the impending ruin of Jerusalem, and of the temple, for such is the meaning given to this expression which he had just used: "Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate." If we believe the majority of interpreters, this fearful prediction gave rise to the following conversation, which only served to confirm it, by repeating it in terms still more precise and more energetic: (*a*) "Jesus being come out of the temple, went away: and his disciples came to show him the buildings of the temple;" according to the interpretation which we have adopted, their intention was to make him revoke the sentence which he had pronounced against that superb edifice. They spoke of it, therefore, with this design: (*b*) "And some saying of the temple that it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, one of his disciples saith to him: Master, behold what manner of stones, and what buildings are here! Jesus answering, said to him: Seest thou all these great buildings? Amen, I say to you, these things which you see, the days will come in which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down (11)."

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxiv. 1.
(*b*) St. Luke, xxi. 5, 6; St. Mark, xiii. 1, 2; St. Matthew, xxiv. 2.

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(11) This prediction contains nothing hyperbolical. The Romans had burned and levelled the temple, but the foundations were remaining. Julian the Apostate, having granted to the Jews permission to rebuild it, the latter commenced by uprooting the ancient foundations, in order to substitute new ones. The work was not completed, when

God, although not subject to change, alters, nevertheless, his decrees when men become perverse. This he did with regard to converted Nineveh, and he would have done the same towards the Jews, if they had sought to obtain their pardon by similar penance. But their anticipated obduracy rendered irrevocable the sentence which had just been pronounced against them. The positive manner in which the Saviour repeated it, made it intelligible to the apostles, who now only required to know the period of its execution.

They began to consider the means of obtaining this information, and in the mean time they continued their journey. They soon reached their destination, (*a*) "and as he sat on the Mount of Olivet, opposite the temple," the occasion was favorable for alluding to it. "The disciples came to him privately, and Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew asked him: Master, tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all those things shall begin to be fulfilled? what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the consummation of the world?"

This inquiry had two objects—the destruction of the temple and the end of the world, which was to be preceded by the coming of Jesus Christ, as he himself had so often foretold. The apostles, it seems, entertained the notion that these events were to happen about the same time. The cause of this error may have been, that Jesus Christ had associated them in the prediction which he made concerning them. However, he had only done so because of several features of resemblance which were found between the destruction of the Jewish nation and that of the universe, and because the first was to be the figure of the second. But we know that he did not wish the period of his last coming to be known, but only that it might

(*a*) St. Mark, xiii. 3, 4; St. Matthew, xxiv. 3; St. Luke, xxi. 7.

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waving masses of fire issued from the earth, carrying off the remains of the foundations of the accursed temple, and consuming several of the workmen, which compelled the Jews to abandon the enterprise. Let us remark that Julian had permitted the Jews to rebuild the temple with the avowed object of falsifying the prediction of Jesus Christ, that it was these same Jews who had labored with their own hands to effect the entire accomplishment of the prophecy, and we shall then see what men can do when opposed to God.

be foreseen when it began to approach. We may almost say the same of the ruin of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Synagogue, the precise time of which he never made known, although he clearly insinuated that the time was not far distant. He does not, therefore, undeceive his disciples; and having rather in view to instruct his Church than to satisfy their curiosity, he goes on to inform them by what marks men may recognize the approach of these two great events. We have already said that they are sometimes represented by characters which are common to both, sometimes distinguished by others which are peculiar to each. An attentive reader will find it easy to distinguish between them, and will at once remark that the first part of the prophecy applies almost exclusively to the ruin of Jerusalem, and the second to the last coming of Jesus Christ, who thus commences to speak of it, in answer to the question which the disciples had just put to him.

CHAPTER LVI.

FORERUNNING SIGNS.—SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN.—THE LAST TRUMPET.—THE ELECT GATHERED TOGETHER.—VIGILANCE ALWAYS NECESSARY.—ONE TAKEN, ANOTHER LEFT.

(*a*) "TAKE heed, lest any man seduce you: for many will come in my name, saying: I am Christ (1); and the time is at hand. They will seduce many; go ye not, therefore, after them."

(*b*) "When you shall hear of wars and seditions, be not terrified. These things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet present-

(*a*) St. Mark, xiii. 5, 6; St. Matthew, xxiv. 5; St. Luke, xxi. 8.
(*b*) St. Luke, xxi. 9–11; St. Matt. xxiv. 8; St. Luke, xxi. 12–15; St. Mark, xiii. 9–11.

(1) *Even now there are become many Antichrists,* said the apostle Saint John, ep. 1, chap. 2; in point of fact, there appeared several false Messiahs, from the death of Jesus Christ till the destruction of Jerusalem. There shall appear many more before the end of the world besides him who is called the Antichrist, by excellence; this mark is common to both events.

ly. Then he said to them: Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There shall be great earthquakes in divers places, and pestilences and famines, and terrors from heaven, and there shall be great signs (2). Now all these things are the beginning of sorrows; but before all these things (3) they will lay their hands on you; and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons. Look to yourselves, for they shall deliver you up to councils, and in the synagogues you shall be beaten, and you shall stand before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony unto them. Lay it up, therefore, in your hearts, when they shall lead you and deliver you up, not to meditate before how you shall answer; but whatsoever shall be given ye in that hour speak ye. For I shall give you a mouth and wisdom which all your enemies shall not be able to resist and gainsay (4); for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost (5)."

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(2) History attests that all those scourges preceded the ruin of Jerusalem. In the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xi., mention is made of the famine which was spread over the entire world during the time of the Emperor Claudius. After famine comes plague, says a Greek proverb. Eusebius speaks of three Asiatic cities which were levelled by an earthquake, and Josephus, of prodigies and heavenly signs, such as had never before appeared. After the death of Nero, the whole Roman empire was a prey to the wars which were excited by the different princes who successively disputed the empire. It is well known that these scourges made much more terrible ravages in Judea than in the rest of the world. These scourges, in their turn, are but the feeble image of those which shall desolate the universe previous to its dissolution. The past is a guarantee for the future, and what has been certifies for that which is yet to come.

(3) What follows is a repetition of the prediction which Jesus Christ made to his apostles, and of the instructions which he gave them immediately after he had chosen them. See what may require explanation at page 181, *et seq.*, Part I., and the notes thereto appended.

(4) This will only render them the more furious; for, when you strip passion of all the appearances under which it endeavored to disguise itself, it no longer affects any thing, because it has no longer any thing to lose, and it then seems to say: I still wished to appear just and reasonable to a certain extent; but, since your answers no longer leave me this resource, I throw off the mask, and manifest myself openly for what I am—iniquity and fury. Nevertheless, confess, O ye confessors! and fear not to increase the rage of these tigers thirsting for your blood. What matter should your bodies be butchered and hacked to pieces; but it is a matter of paramount importance *that iniquity should have its mouth closed*, and that truth should triumph.

(5) We have several of these answers in the acts of the martyrs, and it is easy to recognize therein the Spirit of strength and truth, by whom they were suggested. After so

But what shall affect them more than all, and what they must, nevertheless, expect, is, adds the Saviour, that (*a*) "you shall be betrayed by your parents and brethren, and kinsmen and friends, and some of you will they put to death. And the brother shall betray his brother unto death, and the father his son. And the children shall rise up against the parents, and shall work their death, and you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake. Then shall many be scandalized, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another (6). And many false prophets shall rise, and shall seduce many, and because iniquity hath abounded (7), the charity of many shall grow cold; but he that shall persevere to the end he shall be saved. But a hair of your head shall not perish (8). In your patience you shall possess your souls (9). This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached to the whole world (10), for a testimony to all nations; and then shall the consummation come."

(*a*) St. Luke, xxi. 16, 17; St. Mark, xiii. 12–14; St. Matthew, xiv. 10.

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authentic a promise of divine inspiration, may we not in some measure regard them as a second Revelation?

(6) Those who shall have fallen will deliver up those who shall remain faithful, and will hate them even unto death. This is the hatred of renegades, always more envenomed and more implacable than that of the persecuting infidel.

(7) Iniquity here signifies persecution, because this persecution shall be very furious; the fear of being exposed to it shall be the cause why many of your brethren will not venture to exercise charity towards you. It is in the same sense, that is to say, with reference to charity towards our neighbors, that we usually say that charity hath waxed cold.

(8) A great source of confidence for men when attacked by a host of enemies, and abandoned by their brethren. God has numbered all the hairs of their head, and not one of them shall be taken without his permission. Here is the reason why it is said that not one of them shall be lost; and this text serves also to prove the resurrection.

(9) You shall possess your souls; that is to say, you shall preserve and save them. Sufferings shall save those only who suffer with patience; they damn the impatient and the unresigned.

Notwithstanding this, however, sufferings are very desirable in order to attain salvation, inasmuch as adversity has but one single temptation, which is that of impatience, whereas prosperity has temptations of every kind. It is even easier to reason one's self out of impatience, because patiently to suffer adversity is no additional pain to the human mind; whereas, to conduct one's self with moderation in prosperity is always some subtraction from pleasure. Thus we see that patience in adversity is not so rare a virtue as is moderation in prosperity.

(10) We see by this passage that they are in error who consider this prophecy as

(*a*) "When you shall see Jerusalem compassed about with an army, then know that the desolation thereof is at hand (11). When, therefore, you shall see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place (12), (he that readeth let him understand), then they that are in Judea let them flee to the mountains; and those who are in the midst thereof depart out, and those who are in the countries not enter into it. Let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, nor enter therein to take any thing out of the house; and he that is in the field let him not go back to take his coat, for these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled that are written. But woe to them that are with child, and give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations. Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the nations be fulfilled."

Jesus would have stopped there, if he had only alluded to Jeru-

(*a*) St. Luke, xxi. 20–24; St. Matthew, xxiv. 15; St. Mark, xiii. 14–16.

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merely regarding the end of the world, and by no means applicable to the ruin of Jerusalem. Other texts will convince us that the opinion of those who understand the text as exclusively regarding the ruin of Jerusalem, and by no means relating to the end of the world, is equally untenable.

(11) The Gospel was already published over all parts of the known world when Jerusalem was destroyed. Your faith, wrote Saint Paul to the Romans, is celebrated over the whole world. Before the end of the world it shall be preached everywhere without exception. This characteristic is also applicable to both events, imperfectly to the first, but perfectly to the latter.

(12) According to Saint Mark, *where it ought not*—that is to say, in the temple, as Daniel said in the very words (Dan. ix. 27). People are divided in opinion as to what is here termed the abomination of desolation. 1st. Inasmuch as it is given for a certain sign of the impending ruin of Jerusalem, it could not be any of those things which had already occurred when Jesus Christ spoke, nor any of those occurrences which took place after the ruin of Jerusalem and of the temple. Several explanations, which it would be useless to report, are already refuted by this single observation. 2d. History furnishes us with nothing to which this prophecy is more applicable than what was perpetrated in the temple when seized upon by the faction who assumed the name of Zealots. These monsters profaned it by so many crimes and abominations, that Titus, who could not listen to the recital of them without being horrified, took God to witness that he was in no wise the cause thereof. He even had remonstrances conveyed to them more than once, entreating them to put an end to such fearful excesses.

salem and the Jewish people. All that was to happen to them is clearly foretold: the city is destroyed, the people dispersed, and led captive through all the kingdoms of the earth; and victorious nations trample under foot the scattered ruins of the holy city. It is here, therefore, that reality succeeds to figures, and the wreck of heaven and of earth to the destruction of a single nation. Jesus, who passes imperceptibly from one to the other, commences the prediction of that dreadful catastrophe, by these words, which have a remarkable connection with the foregoing: (*a*) "Pray that your flight be not in the winter, or on the Sabbath; for [*he presently added*] in those days shall be such tribulations as were not from the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, neither shall be. And unless the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh should be saved; but for the sake of the elect, he hath shortened the days. Then, if any man shall say to you: Lo, here is Christ; lo, he is here: do not believe. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall show great signs and wonders (13), insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect. Take you heed, therefore: behold, I have foretold you all things. If, therefore, they shall say to you: Behold, he is in the desert; go ye not out: Behold, he is in the closet; believe it not (14): for, as lightning cometh out of the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxiv. 20–24, 26–28; St. Mark, xiii. 19–23.

(13) The world, converted by true miracles, shall be almost entirely perverted by pretended miracles. There is no means more efficacious in ensnaring the credulity of men. However, those who will give credit to false miracles shall be inexcusable, because, although it be not always an easy matter, it is never impossible to discern between the two. Theology sets forth ample demonstrations on this subject. We shall confine ourselves to observing here that every work wrought by way of confirmation of a doctrine opposed to Scripture, or condemned by the Church—such a work, however miraculous it may appear, is evidently a false miracle, refuted by other miracles incomparably more numerous, more certain, and more wonderful. Such are all those which have been wrought for the purpose of establishing the truth of Scripture and the authority of the Church.

(14) They shall be free to allow themselves to be seduced; however, it is certain, and of infallible certainty, that they will not allow themselves to be seduced; which signifies that liberty has not been taken away from them by the decree which has elected them, and that, nevertheless, this decree cannot fail to be carried into execution. All the faithful are bound to believe both one and the other of these truths. It is the province of Theologians to explain how they harmonize with each other.

east, and appeareth even in the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (15). Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together (16).

(*a*) "And immediately after the tribulation of those days, there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth, distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea, and of the waves: men withering away for fear (17), and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven; and the powers of heaven shall be moved (18)."

(*b*) "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven (19); then shall all tribes of the earth mourn (20), and they shall see the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxiv. 29; St. Luke, xxi. 25, 26.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxiv. 30, 31; St. Mark, xiii. 27.

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(15) The second coming of Jesus Christ shall be so visible, that the fact of our not seeing it is sufficient evidence to assure us that it has not as yet occurred. It shall resemble those huge flashes of lightning which, issuing from the depth of a dark night, dazzle all eyes by their splendor, and illumine, in an instant, an entire hemisphere.

(16) Several allegorical meanings have been given to this text. The most probable is that which makes it signify the ardent desire of pious souls for the adorable body of Jesus Christ—whether for the purpose of remaining in his presence, or of being nourished with his vivifying flesh. The literal sense refers to the lightning. Jesus Christ, like lightning, shall manifest himself by himself. It suffices to have eyes in order to recognize him. No reasoning shall be necessary for that purpose. Sense and instinct shall bring all men to his feet, in the same way as instinct alone gathers birds of prey round the carcass. Job had said, xxxix. 30: "Wheresoever the carcass shall be, the eagle is." Jesus Christ merely repeats these words. The Greek word of Saint Matthew, which the Vulgate renders by that of *corpus*, properly signifies a dead body.

(17) We may form an idea of the terror which shall be caused by this horrible convulsion of the universe, by the fear which is struck into the hearts of most men by a thunder-peal, which is an occurrence so common, so brief, and so seldom followed by any fatal effect. *Who shall not fear thee, O King of nations!*—Jerem. x. 7.

(18) People dispute, and shall dispute until the end of the world, upon the manner in which these stars shall fall and the heavenly virtues (called elsewhere the pillars of the universe) shall be shaken; when the time comes, we shall see clearly what Jesus Christ meant when he said: The stars shall fall from heaven; and the powers of heaven shall be moved.

(19) Interpreters have also entertained different opinions as to what might be this sign of the Son of man. The Church fixes the meaning thereof, when she says: This sign of the cross shall appear in the heavens when the Lord shall come to judge.

(20) The Jews, to whom the cross was a *scandal;* the Gentiles, who treated it as

Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven (21), with much power and majesty. And he shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice; and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them."

The remembrance of his elect, whom he again names, induces him to soften down, all of a sudden, these terrible images. He wishes that what should make the wicked wither away with grief and fear, should be to them a subject of joy, and a source of confidence. In reality, these signs, which shall announce to the first the unforeseen appearance of the avenger of their crimes, shall be to the others the infallible sign of the advent of him who is to reward their virtues. It is, therefore, to them that he addresses these consoling words, in the person of his apostles, who represented them all: (*a*) "But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand. And he spoke to them a similitude: See the fig-tree, when the branch thereof is now tender, and the leaves are come forth, and all the trees when they now shoot forth their fruit, you know that summer is nigh; so you also, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is at hand. Amen, I say to you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled (22). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

Jesus again reverts to the question concerning the precise time of the events which he had just announced, an inquiry which he does not choose to answer, as shown by these words: (*b*) "But of the day or hour no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son (23), but the Father."

(*a*) St. Luke, xxi. 28–35; St. Mark, xiii. 28. (*b*) St. Mark, xiii. 32.

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folly. They shall then see that it is the most shining testimony, both of the power and the wisdom of God (I. Cor. i. 24). Hence remorse, confusion, and despair.

(21) Behold one of those marks which clearly point out the last judgment. This part of the prophecy should never have been accomplished, if the whole prophecy had had exclusively for its object the ruin of Jerusalem.

(22) The present generation, by applying it to the ruin of Jerusalem; mankind, by applying it to the end of the world.

(23) The Arians have abused this expression, so as to turn it into an argument against

There is a very close analogy between the end of the world and the end of each particular man. Terrible phenomena shall announce the proximity of the first, as grievous sickness shall give warning that the second is not far off. But still, God does not wish that we should know the day nor the hour thereof. This ignorance is necessary, in order to preserve a certain physical and political order, which is only sustained by the hope of a long existence. Would the husbandman take the trouble of sowing his field, if it were revealed to him that he should not live until the harvest? Thus the entire world would fall into a universal languor, at least for a century before its end, if we knew exactly when that is to be. But the principal reason for which God leaves men in ignorance of the end of all things, is in order that they, living ever in expectation of it, may be always ready for the moment when it shall arrive. The warning is for all times, and for all men, because all are mortal, and that the end of

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the divinity of the Son. It might have been said in answer to them, that it was not absolutely impossible that the Son, considering in him human nature alone, might be ignorant of the day of judgment; so that ignorance would be no argument against his divinity.

But the Catholic Church does not acknowledge in the Son, even considered as man, ignorance of any matter whatever which has been, which is, or which shall be. In what sense, therefore, could it be said that the day of judgment was unknown to him? It is this which constitutes the difficulty of this text, and gives rise to so many explanations of its meaning. Here are the two which appear to be the most generally received. According to the first, the Son was not cognizant of the day of judgment in such a way that he could reasonably communicate the knowledge thereof; and with reference to his disciples, who sought to learn it from him, it was as though he knew it not. Thus, a confessor, when questioned upon a matter which he only knows under the seal of confession, can answer, without violating truth, that he is not aware of it. The second explanation is more abstruse. The Son, considered even according to his divine nature, attributes to the Father alone, by *appropriation*, the knowledge of the end of the world, in the same way as creation is attributed to him alone; undoubtedly because the creation of the world and its destruction are regarded as belonging to the same power. They apply in reference to this subject these words of Jesus Christ to his disciples: It is not for you to know the times or moments *which the Father hath put in his power* (Acts i.). It is also in the same sense that he has said upon another occasion: To sit on my right hand or my left is not mine to give you, but to them for whom it is prepared; which signifies that the right of disposing thereof is appropriated to the Father, although it belongs equally to the three divine persons.

Every prophecy which foretells the time of the end of the world is false, and he who makes it is a false prophet. This evidently follows from the passage which we have just explained, let it be taken in whatever sense it may.

life is, to all those who die, the end of the world. Let each one, therefore, apply to himself what the Saviour seems to address to those only who shall see the latter days, when he continues in these words: (*a*) "Take heed, watch, and pray (24); for ye know not when the time is. Take heed to yourselves [*said he again*], lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life (25), and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the earth. Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of man. As the days of Noe, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For, as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, even till that day in which Noe entered into the ark, and they knew not till the flood came, and took them all away, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be (26)."

But discrimination shall follow these times of confusion. For (*b*) "then two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall

(*a*) St. Mark, xiii. 33; St. Luke, xxi. 34–36; St. Matthew, xxiv. 37–39.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xxiv. 40–44.

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(24) Watch, as if your salvation depended upon yourself alone; pray, because your salvation depends still more on God. Prayer attracts grace: vigilance causes grace not to be received in vain. To watch without praying would be Pelagian presumption; to pray without watching would be a species of quietism; to unite both together is to have both faith and works.

(25) Passions and the business of the world—general causes of man's reprobation. The passions engender sin, and the bustle of business nullifies many projects of conversion. We know that we have need of conversion, we desire it; subdued passions can no longer oppose an obstacle to this conversion, but the matters of business which have succeeded the passions never leave time for it. It will come about, we say; we hope for it, and we are deceived; death has been beforehand with it, and too often occurs before the affair of salvation is even commenced. True it is, that we may have transacted an infinite number of other affairs, all useless then, whilst the one thing needful has been neglected. O ye wise of the world! what think you, then, of your wisdom? *Non insensati*, Sap. V. The wise of time are the fools of eternity.

(26) It is difficult to understand such a security in the midst of the tragic events which Jesus Christ has just described. Saint Jerome thinks that between these events and the arrival of the judge there will be a time of peace, during which men, becoming reassured, will return to their former occupations.

be left (27). Two women shall be grinding at the mill: one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Watch ye, therefore; because ye know not what hour your Lord will come. But this know ye, that if the good man of the house knew at what hour the thief would come, he would certainly watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Wherefore be you also ready, because at what hour you know not, the Son of man will come."

CHAPTER LVII.

SEQUEL.—GOOD AND BAD SERVANTS.—WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.—TALENTS.—JUDGMENT OF JESUS CHRIST.

Now the question is, in what does this vigilance consist, and what dispositions should it establish within us? The Saviour is going to give us this information by these familiar comparisons: (*a*) "Who, thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath appointed over his family, to give them meat in season? Blessed is the servant whom, when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing! Amen, I say to you, he shall place him over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart: My lord is long a coming; and shall begin to strike his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxiv. 45–51; St. Mark, xiii. 34–37.

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(27) In all conditions there are elect and reprobate, which shows that we should always entertain both fear and hope.

Such a courtier is a saint, such a man who dwells in solitude is a great sinner; therefore neither do the difficulties of salvation amount to impossibilities, nor are the facilities of salvation assurances that we shall obtain it.

One single just man in a profession shall suffice to condemn all those who, in the same profession, have not known how to preserve justice.

This testimony shall be the more irreproachable, inasmuch as the just man shall be just only, because he has fulfilled all the duties of his profession, and that the better he has fulfilled them, the more perfect shall be his justice.

with drunkards (1), the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he hopeth not, and at an hour that he knoweth not; and shall separate him, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Even as a man who, going into a far country, left his house, and gave authority to his servants over every work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore; for you know not when the lord of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock's crowing, or at morning; lest, coming on a sudden, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you I say to all: Watch."

But those who shall be taken by surprise shall not be taken short on one account alone, viz., for having utterly neglected to prepare for the coming of their master; but also if they have begun their preparation too late. In the same way, the weeping and gnashing of teeth shall not be the lot of the bad servant alone; they shall also be the lot of the useless servant. It is plain that these differences give weight to the preceding examples; and the reader will not regard as merely a repetition what Jesus is going to say. Let no one be astonished at his dwelling longer on this subject than he has upon any other. Since it behooves us to act so as not to be surprised by death, we are bound, therefore, to look to a matter which is to decide our eternal salvation; and on what other subject should the Saviour so earnestly warn us to be careful?

(*a*) "Then shall the kingdom of heaven (2) be like to ten virgins,

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxv. 1–46.

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(1) Those who say: Let us enjoy life, death is yet afar off, are described here feature by feature.

(2) The kingdom of heaven is the Church taken in its full extent—that is to say, as being the society of all the faithful, whether just or sinners. The bridegroom is Jesus Christ; the bride is the predestined and triumphant Church; the ten virgins are the whole body of the faithful; the wise virgins are the just; and the sinners are represented by the foolish virgins. The lamps signify faith; and the oil signifies good works. The sleep whilst awaiting the bridegroom is forgetfulness of death, which arises from the fact of our believing it always distant. We may remark that this species of sleep comes also over the just; but these, when they are surprised, are not deceived, because they expect to be so surprised. The unexpected arrival of the bridegroom is the moment of death and of judgment which immediately follows. Faith, accompanied by works, enters with him into the nuptial hall: faith, without works, is irrevocably excluded therefrom.

who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride (3). Five of them were foolish, and five wise. But the five foolish having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. The bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you (4), go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves (5). Whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut: at last came also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answering, said: Amen, I say to you, I

This truth is, as it were, the moral of the whole parable, and the principal instruction which it is meant to convey. There are other incidental instructions which we may remark as we go along. The return of the foolish virgins, the door which they find closed, their supplicating the bridegroom to open it for them, and the answer which they receive from him, should all be considered as mere accompaniments to the parable, and having no application; for assuredly the reprobate, after their judgment and their condemnation, shall not come to the gate of paradise to beseech the Lord to open it for them.

(3) Reprobates, although truly virgins. The reason is because there are proud virgins, there are virgins *who hate*, virgins who slander—angels from the purity of their bodies—demons in the malignity of their heart—justly called foolish, according to Saint Chrysostom, because, whilst victorious over a more powerful enemy, they allow themselves to be vanquished by another much more feeble. It is the gnat, the lion's conqueror, perishing in the spider's web.

(4) The just shall fear lest their own justice may be found insufficient; *and if the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?*—(I. Peter, iv. 18.)

(5) In God's judgment the merits of the one shall not supply the deficiency of others. This is the meaning of this answer of the wise virgins, and not as Protestants say, that the intercession of saints is a nullity, and has no effect. This intercession is a satisfaction for the temporal pains due to sin in this world and in the other: it is also efficacious by way of impetration in obtaining graces which may be available for the salvation and sanctification of those to whom they are granted; but as to merit, properly speaking, this intercession procures it directly for no one. Now, there was here no question as to grace, because the time for co-operation therewith was past, nor as to the temporal pains of a life which was then ended, nor yet as to those of the other life, as it is universally agreed that after the last judgment there shall no longer be a purgatory.

know you not. Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour."

Here follows the example of the useless servant, which the Saviour, after having enjoined constant vigilance, adds to the preceding, continuing his discourse thus: "Even as a man going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods (6). To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every one according to his proper ability, and immediately he took his journey. He that had received five talents went his way and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner, he that had received the two gained other two. But he that had received the one, going his way, digged into the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came, and reckoned with them. He that had received the five talents, coming, brought other five talents, saying: Lord, thou deliveredst to me five talents; behold, I have gained other five over and above. His lord said to him: Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that had received the two talents came and said: Lord, thou deliveredst two talents to me; behold, I have gained other two. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. But he that had received the one talent came and said: Lord, I know that thou art a hard man; thou reapest where thou hast not sown, and gatherest where thou hast not strewed; and being afraid, I went and hid thy talent in the earth. Behold, here thou hast that which was thine. His lord answering, said to him: Wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sow not, and gather where I have not strewed. Thou oughtest, therefore, to have committed my money to the bankers and at my coming I should have received my own with usury. Take ye away, therefore, the talent from him, and give it to him that

(6) For an explanation of this parable, we refer the reader to that on the ten talents (Part II. chapter l. page 386), which so closely resembles this, that several interpreters take it to be the same parable, reported with some accidental circumstances.

hath ten talents. For to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; but from him that hath not, that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away. And the unprofitable servant cast ye out into the exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (7)."

The parables are ended, but not so the judgment. Jesus Christ dismisses figures, and, instead of a mortal bridegroom or a temporal master, he is going to exhibit to us the immortal king of ages in all the lustre of his glory, pronouncing sentences of eternal life or death. If he attaches either one or the other to the practice or to the omission of a single virtue, he does so in order to inform us, on the one hand, how efficacious this one virtue is in obtaining all those which are necessary to salvation; and, on the other hand, in order that we may not be ignorant of the severity of his judgments. For, if eternal chastisements are prepared for those who shall not have done good, what may those expect who shall have done evil? Let us hearken to him, for again it is he who is about to speak:

"And when the Son of man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty. All nations shall be gathered together before him (8), and he shall separate them one from another (9), as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. He shall set the sheep on his right hand, but

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(7) In the parable of the ten talents the slothful servant is at the same time deprived of the reward, and stripped of what had been confided to him. Here we have superadded the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. This is in order to teach us that sloth shall not only be excluded from the reward of labor, but shall also be punished as a crime. There is no medium between heaven and hell. He who is not deserving of the first merits the second.

(8) This word, *shall be gathered together*, decides against Origen, that judgment shall take place in a particular and determined spot. It is generally thought that this shall be in the valley of Jehosaphat. This belief has some foundation in Scripture. What some add is not so certain, although it be not without probability, that Jesus Christ shall appear upon the Mount of Olives, the same mountain from whence he, carried upon a cloud, ascended into heaven, and where two angels announced to the disciples that he should one day return again.

(9) He shall make this separation by the ministry of the angels; for it is said elsewhere: The Son of man shall send *his angels*, and *they shall gather* out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire (Saint Matthew, xiii. 41, 42).

the goats on his left: then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom (10) prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat (11); I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee; thirsty, and gave thee drink (12)? and when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in?

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(10) The Greek word signifies *inherit* the kingdom. Now, if it be possessed by the title of inheritance, Protestants add, it is not, therefore, conferred as the reward of works. We are surprised that they should venture to dispute the merit of works whilst reading this passage, wherein Jesus Christ assigns no other cause for the recompense bestowed upon his elect. Catholics, who do not exclude the right of inheritance, answer that the saints shall possess heaven both as an inheritance and as a reward. True, it shall only be given to the children of God; but this quality, which God confers gratuitously, is preserved by good works only, and is only lost by bad works. Those who shall do the first shall inherit heaven, because they shall be found worthy of such inheritance. Those who have done evil have rendered themselves unworthy of it, and shall, therefore, be disinherited.

Heaven is due only to the just. Justice cannot be merited by works, since it is a matter of faith that justification always precedes merit; therefore, to speak precisely, the foundation of celestial glory cannot be deserved; we can only merit an increase thereof. A silver pound can never be made out of nothing; but, should this pound be given gratuitously, the receiver may turn it to such account as to make ten pounds of it. We see here, at the same time, both grace and merit: grace in the first pound which is given—merit in the nine others which are added thereto. There is, however, this difference, that in the first instance grace is pure, and without any mixture of merit; whereas, in the others merit always depends on grace, not only because it is its first foundation, but also because, without the actual assistance of grace, man is incapable of making it available. Thus it is that God perfects his own gifts whilst crowning our merits.

(11) Who are so well entitled to this great kingdom as the benefactors of its mighty king?

(12) We cannot reasonably think that the just, when in heaven, can be ignorant that the good which they have done towards the poor, who were the brothers and the members of Jesus Christ, was done to Jesus Christ himself. They cannot, even at present, be ignorant of this fact, since Jesus Christ has so openly declared it. Knowing it so well both before and after their death, they cannot be supposed to forget it at the day of judgment. Yet they seem to be ignorant of this truth, since it seems to excite their surprise. We may answer that they will not put the question which Jesus Christ here puts in their mouth, but that the Saviour avails himself of the occasion, in order to inform the world of this truth, and to render it more evident, by the turn which he gives it. Hence this account, which in every other respect must be taken to the letter, may be

or naked, and covered thee? or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee? The king answering, shall say to them: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren (13), you did it to me."

"Then he shall say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, you cursed (14), into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels (15). For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me not in; naked, and you clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me (16). Then shall they also answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Then he shall answer them: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least ones, neither did you do it to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just into life everlasting (17)." Thus shall be

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viewed as a parable in this single point. Or else, if the just do put this question, it will be on their part an exclamation of astonishment and of admiration, inasmuch as the truth, which they previously recognized, shall never have appeared to them so striking as when they shall behold, in all the lustre of his power and majesty, him whom faith had taught them to recognize under the rags of the poor.

(13) Alms-giving exercised towards a poor person, for the sake of Jesus Christ, is more meritorious than if it were exercised towards Christ himself, inasmuch as such an act superadds to the merit of giving alms to Jesus Christ that of recognizing him in the poor.

(14) Ye cursed, simply, and not ye cursed of *my Father*, as he had previously said: Ye blessed of my Father. The blessing of the just is from God; the malediction of the wicked comes from themselves alone: *Destruction is thy own, O Israel: thy help is only in me.*

(15) Hell was, therefore, made for them, and not for man. But man, if we may venture to say so, makes himself for hell, by rendering himself the slave of him who is its prince, and by imitating those who dwell therein. It is not said with reference to the eternal fire as with reference to the heavenly kingdom, that it was prepared from the beginning of the world. Sin preceded hell. God only created the latter when he was, as it were, forced to do it by the rebellion of the angels.

(16) Here is established the obligation of assisting the needy when we do not even meet with them, who do not present themselves openly before our eyes, and whom we are bound to seek out. Those who are ashamed to beg are included in this number as well as the sick and prisoners. The visit may sometimes be a matter of perfection only, but the assistance is always a matter of precept.

(17) Into an eternity, properly speaking; for in the enunciation of a sentence which only admits simple and precise terms, every word should be taken literally.

accomplished this saying of the Saviour with respect to the former: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy!"—(Matt. v.) And with regard to the latter, that other saying of his apostle: "For judgment without mercy" is reserved "to him that hath not done mercy."—(James, ii. 11.)

This concerning the end of the world was the last prophecy which Jesus made before the people, and charity was the last injunction which he laid upon them. With this he terminated his public preaching; and after having thoroughly acquitted himself of his duty as a teacher, he applied himself exclusively, whilst preparing for death, to fulfil that of Redeemer.

The expression being the same for the eternity of life and the eternity of punishment, it would be utterly inconsistent to understand the first as expressive of an eternity, properly speaking, and the second as indicative of an eternity, improperly speaking, viz., a very lengthened but still limited duration.

Origen denied the eternity of hell. He was one of the most brilliant writers whom Christianity has ever produced, and this error which he undertook to establish was of all others the most flattering and the most important. Nevertheless, this error, which appeared so likely to be disseminated, and to last longer than any other, has been adopted but by few, and was of short duration. So thoroughly have mankind been always convinced that the revelation is so evident here as to leave no room for cavilling, and that nothing is certain in Scripture, if this point be not clearly established therein.

If there were no hell, God would not be infinitely just; and if God were not infinitely just, he would be no longer God.

If hell were not eternal, it would be because sin did not deserve an infinite punishment; but if sin did not deserve an infinite punishment, a mediator of infinite dignity would not be necessary in order to expiate it.

There is a God; therefore there is a hell. A God became man; therefore hell is eternal.

These are, indeed, incomprehensible mysteries; but let us consider well the mutual dependence which they have upon each other, and what additional probability each part acquires by the just proportion it bears to the whole. A fiction has never yet been so well concerted; and independently of the victorious proofs which establish this series of truths—a religion which presents simultaneously an infinite offence in sin—an infinite duration in the punishment—an infinite dignity in the mediator—that religion, I say, instead of shocking our reason by the immense depth of its mysteries, rather inclines us to believe, because of the wonderful harmony which blends all these mysteries together.

CHAPTER LVIII.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST JESUS.—JUDAS MAKES HIS CONTRACT.—PASCHAL SUPPER.—WASHING OF THE FEET.—TREASON FORETOLD.

(*a*) "Now the feast of unleavened bread, which is called the pasch, was at hand; the feast was after two days. And it came to pass when Jesus had ended all these words, he said to his disciples: You know that after two days (1) shall be the pasch, and the Son of man

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 1–46; St. Mark, xiv. 1; St. Matthew, xxvi. 1, 3, 5, 15, 16.

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(1) This was on a Tuesday, whence it follows that the passover must have fallen on the Thursday evening; and it was then, in reality, that Jesus celebrated this feast. But one great difficulty here is, that Saint John says clearly that the passover of the Jews was not to be made until the Friday evening. Among the several answers which have been given to this difficulty, we select those which have appeared the most satisfactory. According to some interpreters, the Galileans eat the passover one day before the Jews of Judea proper, and of Jerusalem. The reason of this was, that the paschal lamb, before it was eaten, should be immolated by the priests. Now, as the priests could not serve all in a single day, it became necessary to take two days for the purpose. In like manner, several days have been given for the performance of the Christian paschal solemnity, because Easter Sunday, which is properly the day for it, would not suffice. According to others, the Jews, after their return from the captivity of Babylon, had made a regulation, that when the passover fell upon a Thursday evening, it was lawful to transfer it to the Friday. The reason of this toleration is, that the day of the passover, commencing with the evening when it was celebrated, was to be a festival day. Now this day being followed by Saturday, which occurred every time the passover fell upon a Thursday evening, occasioned two consecutive days of rest, which became a very troublesome observance, on account of the extreme strictness with which this rest was observed. However, as this custom was merely tolerated, those who did not wish to observe it were not obliged to do so, and the Saviour was of this class; but it must be said that the majority of the nation availed themselves of it without any scruple.

Here is a third explanation. Jesus Christ and all the Jews eat the passover on the Thursday evening, which was the beginning of the fourteenth day of the moon. It is well known that the days, amongst the Hebrews, commenced in the evening at sunset. The solemnity commenced only at the close of the fourteenth, which coincided with the commencement of the fifteenth. This is conformable to these words of Leviticus, chap. xxiii., *the fifteenth day of the same month is the solemnity of the unleavened bread*, which words plainly signify that between the eating of the paschal lamb, which was fixed for the fourteenth, and the solemnity appointed to take place on the fifteenth, there intervened one day which belonged to no festival. Then the Jews were, moreover, obliged

shall be delivered up to be crucified." We have already said that the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Jesus to death. "Then (2) were gathered together the chief priests and the ancients of the people into the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiphas, and they consulted together that by subtilty they might apprehend Jesus, and put him to death. But they feared the people, [*therefore*] they said: Not on the festival-day, lest there should be a tumult among the people. And Satan entered into Judas, who was named Iscariot (3), one of the twelve, and he went and discoursed with the chief priests and the magistrates how he might

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by the law to offer various sacrifices of the immolation of the paschal lamb, and it was a matter of custom, and even of obligation, to eat the flesh of the immolated victims. The circumstance of time caused this act to be also styled the eating of the passover. This explanation smooths away every difficulty, and answers every objection. For although the paschal lamb was eaten on Thursday evening, which was the commencement of the fourteenth day, Saint John might have said at that time: *Before the festival day of the pasch*, because the festival, properly speaking, should only commence on the next day, the fifteenth. He might also say that the Jews did not wish to enter into the judgment-hall of Pilate, for fear of contracting legal impurity, which would have hindered them from eating the passover, because, although they had already eaten the paschal lamb, they would still have to eat the victims which were immolated at the commencement of the solemnity, and they very naturally called this eating the passover. We cannot here go further into this explanation, which is to be found, with the proofs which establish it, and the answer to the objections, in a treatise by a Spanish Theologian named Louis Léon, of the order of Saint Augustine. This little work deserves to be read. It has been translated into French by Père Daniel, and published in the works of that father, tome 3, page 449.

(2) *Then*, to wit, the next day, which was Wednesday. It was on account of this consultation, at which they took decisive measures for putting the Saviour to death, that it was formerly the custom to fast on Wednesday. Some interpreters confound this consultation with that which was held four days earlier, and which we have reported page 373, Part II. It appears that there were two consultations; it was resolved, at the first, that the just man should be put to death; at the second consultation, which is that here alluded to, the only subject for deliberation was the manner in which they should proceed, in order to carry the prior resolution into effect.

(3) That is to say, that Judas then gave full and entire consent to the design which Satan had suggested to him of delivering up the Saviour. Thus did Satan enter into the traitor, in order to possess, not his body, but his soul—two very different sorts of possession. The possession of the body is by no means free, either in itself or in its effects; wherefore it is nowise criminal in either of these respects. The possession of the soul is criminal in itself; for the devil possesses the soul of those only who are willing to admit him. It is also criminal in its effects, because, although Satan acquires great sway over the soul which he possesses, his dominion does not go so far as doing violence to the will.

betray him to them. He said to them: What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you? Who hearing it were glad, and they appointed him thirty pieces of silver (4). And he promised; and from thenceforth he sought opportunity to betray him, in the absence of the multitude."

The remainder of the day, which was Wednesday, was spent in waiting for this opportunity. (*a*) "And on the first day of the Azymes, on which it was necessary that the pasch should be killed, the disciples came to Jesus, saying: Whither wilt thou that we go and prepare for thee to eat the pasch? He sendeth two of his disciples, Peter and John, saying: Go and prepare for us the pasch, that we may eat. But they said: Where wilt thou that we prepare? He said to them: Go ye into the city; there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house where he entereth in, and whithersoever he shall go in, say to the master of the house, the Master saith: My time is near at hand (5); I will keep the pasch at thy house with my disciples; where is my refectory, where I may eat the pasch with my disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room, furnished. There prepare ye for us. His disciples went their way, and came into the city, and they found as he had told them (6), and they prepared the pasch. And when

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 17, 18; St. Luke, xxii. 7–11, 14–18; St. Mark, xiv. 12–17.

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(4) We read in Exodus, chap. xxi., that if any one wilfully caused the death of a free person, he was punished with death. If it was the death of a slave he had occasioned, he paid thirty shekels of silver, the same price for which the king of angels and of men consents to be sold. We make this remark for grateful hearts, who do not wish to be ignorant of any circumstance of the opprobrium which the Man-God has endured for their salvation.

(5) The time of my death. Jesus Christ wishes to convey to him by these words, that he desires to give him this evidence of his affection; for it was a very signal proof thereof to give his house the preference, for the purpose of celebrating there his last passover, which was only to precede his death by a single day. It appears that this man was one of his disciples, since Jesus Christ makes them say to him simply: *The Master saith to thee.* To enter into a disquisition as to why he is not named would be superfluous. What would it avail us to know the reason why? Jesus speaks of his passion as *his time,* because it was principally for this passion that he came into the world; and also because it was the time wherein he resolved to die, his death being a perfectly free act as well in itself as in the time, the place, and the manner thereof.

(6) Prophecy and power are alike visible on this occasion. The reader may remem-

evening was come, he cometh with the twelve. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him, and he said to them: With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer (7). For I say to you, that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God (8). And having taken the chalice, he gave thanks, and said: Take and divide it among you. For I say to you, that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the kingdom of God come" (9).

If we should consider the wine in the same light as the passover, since the latter was as yet only the eating of the paschal lamb, we must believe that the wine of which the Saviour here spoke was not as yet that which he had changed into his blood. When the Jews celebrated the passover, the father of the family, or he who presided at the feast, blessed the first and the last cup. He drank of it the first, and then presented it to all the guests, who drank of it, each according to his rank. One of the evangelists, who mentions expressly the two chalices, places immediately after the first the words which have just been read, and it is only the second chalice which was distributed after the repast, that he speaks of as the chalice of the Lord's blood. Nevertheless, two evangelists place these same words after the consecrated chalice. Perhaps, also, the two sacred authors, who speak only of the second chalice, take advantage of this opportunity, which was the only one they had, in order to record these words, which were far too interesting to be omitted.

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ber with reference to this subject, what we have said of the meeting the ass and the foal, Part II., page 397, note 11.

(7) Because in this passover he was to communicate himself wholly and entirely to men by means of the divine Eucharist. A great desire of receiving him therein is the best manner in which we can acknowledge the great desire which the Saviour had to give himself to us.

(8) We find in the mysteries of the new law the reality of what was only shadowed forth and prefigured by the old law. Both the mysteries and the figures shall be perfectly accomplished and wholly unveiled in heaven. The dawn follows the night, and ushers in the clear light of day.

(9) Heaven and the Church are called indiscriminately the kingdom of God. We should here understand the expression as referring to heaven, because Saint Matthew, when recording the same discourse, makes the Saviour say: I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in *the kingdom of my Father*. Now, what is termed in Scripture the kingdom of the Father, is always Heaven, and never the Church.

Now reality is going to succeed figures, and to the eating of the paschal lamb the eating of the flesh of the Man-God; a mystery equally beyond our conceptions and our hopes. Here the power and the love of a God are displayed in their infinity, plainly showing that he alone could be the author of this mystery, in whom every thing is infinite, and who is infinite in every thing. But a prodigy of humiliation was to precede this prodigy of power; and, in order to place his body in a condition to be present on every altar, it was ordained that Jesus should begin by annihilating this same body at the feet of his disciples. We are now about to consider him in this humiliating posture, after having explained the order in which these actions were all performed, on that evening so full of mysteries and of wonders.

The first of these acts was the eating of the paschal lamb, in which Jesus Christ, always a punctual observer of the law, fulfilled all the prescribed formalities. He ate it, therefore, in a standing posture; and if it be alleged that he then sat or reclined, inasmuch as the Gospel represents him to us in either of these two positions, that would be to confound the first repast with the second. The latter was served up immediately after the eating of the paschal lamb, when that alone was not sufficient to appease the hunger of all those who had partaken of it. And this was the case here, since Jesus Christ had with him his twelve apostles; then followed the repast in which the guests were not limited in the choice of meats, with the exception of the unleavened bread, nor were they bound to any ceremony. This repast, the only one which the evangelists properly call the Supper, or the Lord's Supper, was finished as they expressly state, when the Saviour, having risen from the table, washed the feet of his disciples, after which he resumed his seat, for the purpose of instituting the adorable Eucharist.

(*a*) "Jesus knowing that his hour was come, that he should pass out of this world to his Father (10), having loved his own who were

(*a*) St. John, xiii. 1–20.

(10) This departure deprived the earth of his visible presence only; for the Word, who is everywhere present in his immensity, has never ceased to fill the earth, and his humanity has remained really present thereon in the adorable Eucharist.

in the world, he loved them to the end (11); and when supper was done," as we have just related, "(the devil having now put into the heart (12) of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him) (13), knowing that the Father had (14) given him all things into his hands, and that he came from God, and goeth to God: He riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments, and having taken a tow-

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(11) His disciples: all his elect who were in existence are included in this number, viz., all those whom he left in the world, a land of misery, of woe, and of crime, which increased his tender compassion for them. He loved them until the end of his life. This is the signification of the word *in finem*. Others understand by this expression that he loved them *to excess*. Nothing is more true; and his love never appeared so excessive as in his last moments, wherein he made himself their victim, after having made himself their food. However, the literal sense only expresses the constancy of his love, which, far from being susceptible of change or alteration, appeared always on the increase.

(12) The instigation of the devil is mentioned, and even more than once, in order that we may know how, having been the principal instigator of the Saviour's death, he has deserved, as we have elsewhere remarked, to be deprived of the empire of death. God might also have had another design. He foresaw that people would one day assert that the treachery of Judas is not less the work of God than the conversion of Saint Paul. (Protestants have made this assertion.) This blasphemy is, therefore, refuted by anticipation, and Satan is not more opposed to God than these new evangelists are opposed to the Gospel.

(13) The knowledge which he had of the treachery and of the traitor did not hinder him from washing his feet, and giving him his flesh to eat. The evangelist alludes to it in this place only, for the purpose of making us observe this prodigy of love and of humility. If it were not for this reason, his allusion to it here would be misplaced.

(14) Jesus knew that the work of the redemption had been confided to him by the Father, and that he alone who had commenced it should himself finish it. As the time was becoming short, since he was on the point of returning to the bosom of God from whence he had gone forth, he did three things which he could no longer defer, and which he judged necessary for the establishment and preservation of his Church. He gave an example of the most profound humility; he instituted the sacrament and the perpetual sacrifice of his body and of his blood; lastly, he finished his instructions to us in the person of his apostles, by the admirable discourse which he addressed to them after supper. This is the most common explanation of these words: they are also explained in the following manner: Jesus, although knowing that he had received from the Father the plenitude of divinity and of power, did not disdain to humble himself at the feet of his apostles, and to wash them with his own hands. This sense is very fine; whilst recalling to mind the infinite greatness of him who humbles himself, it paints, with a single stroke, the depth of his humiliations.

If the great who imitate him in this point are sensible of their greatness, they should also remember that he who has given them the example is infinitely higher above them than they themselves are above the poor whom they serve.

el, he girded himself." After these preparations, to which these words are so applicable: He *emptied himself, taking the form of a servant*—"after that he putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. He cometh, therefore, to Simon Peter (15). And Peter saith to him: Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, and said to him: What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith to him: Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him: If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me (16). Simon Peter saith to him: Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head (17). Jesus saith to him: He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly (18). And you are clean, but not all; for he knew who he was that would betray him, therefore he said: You are not all clean."

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(15) Saying, as the evangelist does, He cometh, *therefore*, to Simon Peter, after having said he began to wash the feet of his disciples, gives us to understand that Jesus did not begin with Saint Peter. Notwithstanding, some interpreters will have it that he did, and that for the sole reason of Peter's being the chief of the apostles, as if a question of rank and pre-eminence could enter into an action wherein the Master placed himself last of all.

(16) You shall not participate in the sacrament of my body, because you shall not have received the symbol of purity which I require from those who participate in it; or otherwise you shall be eternally separated from me, because you have disobeyed the orders which I give you to let me perform the lowly service which I wish to render to you. We may choose between these two explanations. If the first be the true explanation, Saint Peter did not at first comprehend the meaning; but still he understood that some sort of separation between himself and his dear Master was threatened here if he should persist in his refusal. This was sufficient for this disciple, whose love was so ardent, in order to restore him to the most perfect obedience.

"The ardor and zeal of devotion, even when accompanied by exterior marks of humility, are merely illusions, when not regulated by obedience to the Church and to our superiors."

(17) It is love which speaks. Peter, startled at the sight of his Master prostrate at his feet for the purpose of washing them, is, notwithstanding, less amazed at seeing him there, than he is alarmed by the dread of being separated from him.

(18) The feet always become dirty, especially when men walk barefooted, as is commonly thought to have been the case with the apostles. Not so with the rest of the body; when it is very clean, it remains so at least for some time. The most upright individuals always contract, in their commerce with the world, some slight stains, which are like the dust that adheres to the feet. Confession is not the only means to purify us therefrom, but it is the best.

Jesus was perhaps still at the feet of the traitor, when he gave him this first warning, so calculated to touch a heart less callous than his was. The apostles, who knew not to whom he addressed it, might at least have comprehended the lesson by which he inculcated to them a purity more perfect than that which confines itself to exemption from gross faults. This is what Peter knew not before. But to this first instruction, which was directed equally to all, the Saviour added a second, which might apply more especially to him whom he had established the chief of his brethren, although it was common to all. "Then, after he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, having sat down, he said to them: Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I, then, being Lord and Master, having washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. Amen, amen, I say to you, The servant is not greater than his lord, neither is the apostle greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them."

This happiness was not to be enjoyed by all. Wherefore, continues the Saviour: "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen," and if he who is to betray me is found amongst the number, I have not admitted him without knowing what he is; "but that the Scripture may be fulfilled: He that eateth bread with me, shall lift up his heel against me. At present I tell you, before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass you may believe that I am He."

Thus the Saviour was, as it were, divided between two objects which constituted alternately the subject of his discourse. He labored to excite remorse in the heart of Judas, and he exhorted his disciples to render to each other the duties of a charity, both humble and considerate. In order to smooth to them the practice thereof, he adds, that very far from lowering themselves in the sight of men by humbling themselves to one another, the honor which they have of being his apostles, will make them as respected as himself. This exposition alone can connect the preceding words with these, which come immediately after: "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me."

CHAPTER LIX.

INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST.—JESUS IS TROUBLED.—WOE TO THE TRAITOR.—JESUS MAKES HIM KNOWN TO JOHN.—WITHDRAWAL OF JUDAS.—DISPUTE OF THE APOSTLES UPON PRIORITY.—PRESUMPTION OF PETER.—HIS DENIAL FORETOLD.—STATE OF WARFARE ABOUT TO COMMENCE FOR THE DISCIPLES.

THE moment was come when Jesus Christ was at last to institute the sacrament of his body and blood, and to replace the ancient sacrifices by that which, in its unity, should supply the place of them all, and, by its excellence, infinitely surpass them in merit and in value. (*a*) "And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and blessed, and broke, and gave to his disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat; this (1) is my body (2), which is given for

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 26–29; St. Luke, xxii. 19, 20; St. Mark, xiv. 23.

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(1) If, as Luther said, the substance of bread remained in the Eucharist, Jesus Christ could not have said: *This is my body*, but this (which is bread) contains my body; or, my body is united to this; or else, here is my body.

(2) If Jesus Christ meant to say that the Eucharist is not merely the figure of his body, but that it contains the reality, he could not have expressed himself more clearly, seeing that for fifteen centuries the Christian world understood the phrase as importing reality and not figure.

If Jesus Christ meant to say that the Eucharist is only the figure of his body, he could not have expressed himself more obscurely, since for so many ages the entire world understood the phrase as expressing his real presence.

When we say, for fifteen centuries, we are not unaware that, in the eleventh century, Beranger denied the real presence, but he was the first to do so: he had very few disciples; scarcely one remained after his death, and in a short time not a single disciple of his was in existence. He was a restless and fickle man, whose entire life was spent in abjuring what he had taught, and in teaching over again what he had abjured.

Luther frankly avows that he for a long time was itching to attack the dogma of the real presence; but that he could not venture on such a step, having before him those unmistakeable words: *This is my body.*

Calvin denied the real presence, and took his stand by the figurative sense. However, the stamp of reality, so visible in these words of the Saviour, has driven him to assert that, although the body of Jesus Christ be not really present in the Eucharist, yet it is, nevertheless, really and in substance received therein. Thus, whilst seeking to escape from the mystery, he falls into a palpable contradiction.

you. Do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner taking the chalice also, after he had supped, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this (3); for this is my blood, of the New Testament, which shall be shed (4) for you [*and*] for many (5) unto the remission of sins. And they all drank of it. Amen, I say to you," added the Saviour, supposing that he twice made use of this expression, "I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of this vine, until that day when I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of the Father."

According to one of the sacred writers, Jesus, immediately after he had pronounced the words which changed the wine into blood, added these: (*a*) "But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table." These last words, connected, as they are, with the preceding discourse, seem to decide, contrary to the opinion of many, that Judas was then present, and that he received communion with the other disciples. Jesus Christ could not have

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 21.

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(3) That is to say, drink ye all of this chalice, because there was but one single chalice that was to pass from hand to hand. This expression comprises a precept for priests to communicate under both kinds every time that they consecrate, and this precept admits of no exception. Protestants allege that this expression establishes a universal and indispensable obligation of communicating under both kinds. Yet they themselves do not follow this construction, since they have decided in their Synods that communion may be given under one kind, viz., that bread may be given to those who cannot drink wine, which is surely equivalent to deciding that, according to the institution of Jesus Christ, both kinds are not essential to communion.

The legitimacy of communion under one kind is founded on the doctrine of concomitancy.

(4) We read in the Greek, *which is shed*, which is the cause why many interpreters explain the expression as referring to the mystical effusion then made. The author of the Vulgate took it as referring to the effusion thereof, which was to occur upon the cross; and for this reason he has translated it, *which shall be shed*. We say in the words of the consecration, *which shall be shed*, showing that the Church also understands the expression as referring to the effusion on the cross. Jesus Christ might have referred to the same effusion, and yet say, *which is shed*, since an event so near might be regarded as present.

(5) One of the evangelists inserts only *for you;* two others insert *for many*. The Church unites both in the words of consecration. *For many* signifies in this place *for all*, according to the Scriptural mode of expression. Supposing that Jesus Christ had said *for you*, he would not have thereby excluded the reprobate sinner, for, according to the opinion which is most followed, Judas was one of the company present.

shown him more clearly the blackness of his treachery, than in setting it before his eyes at the very moment when he gave him such a pledge of his incomprehensible charity. By profaning that sacrament, the traitor put the finishing stroke to his iniquity.

Jesus, who thus informed his Church that the public sinner must not be excluded from the participation of the sacraments, was pleased to experience within himself a natural horror for a crime, the woeful effects of which he had already resolved to undergo. Wherefore, (*a*) "when he had said these things, he was troubled in spirit, and he testified, and said: Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you that eateth with me shall betray me. The disciples, therefore, looked one upon another, doubting of whom he spoke; and being very much troubled, began every one to say: Is it I (6), Lord? But he answering, said: One of the twelve, who dippeth with me (7) his hand in the dish. And the Son of man, indeed, goeth, as it is written of him (8): but woe to that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed! It were better for him if that man had not been born (9)."

(*a*) St. John, xiii. 21, 22; St. Mark, xiv. 18, 20, 21; St. Matthew, xxvi. 22, 23.

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(6) This humble inquiry shows us that they had already profited by the teaching of the Saviour. A novice in virtue would have said at first: It is not I; I could never be capable of so foul a deed. A saint knows better than men commonly do, that he is within a hair's breadth of being a great sinner and a wicked man.

Their humility makes them fearful that they themselves might be the traitors; their charity hinders them from suspecting others. Those who, in similar circumstances, would have suspected others, and have entertained no apprehension for themselves, would, therefore, have been wanting in humility and in charity.

(7) That is to say, he who eats at the same table as I and with me, in a word, he who is my messmate, for it is not true that Judas actually put his hand on the dish, nor that Jesus Christ had pointed him out by this expression.

(8) With regard to the Son of man, nothing further shall result from this treachery than the fulfilment of the Scriptures, which have foretold the circumstances of his death.

(9) If annihilation be a lesser evil than reprobation, redemption is, therefore, a greater benefit than creation, therefore Jesus Christ is God; for if he were merely a pure creature, there would exist a creature to whom man would be more indebted than to the Creator.

This proof is not of a nature to produce faith in those who have not faith; but it is very capable of confirming those who already have faith, and who are aware how exceedingly jealous God is of our heart.

(*a*) "Judas, that betrayed him," apprehensive lest his silence should excite suspicion, would speak as well as the others. He said, therefore, in his turn: "Is it I, Rabbi? He saith to him: Thou hast said it." The answer was given so secretly, that it was understood by Judas alone. "Wherefore they began to inquire among themselves which of them it was that should do this thing. Now, there was leaning on Jesus's bosom (10) one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter, therefore, beckoned to him (11), and said to him: Who is it of whom he speaketh? He, therefore, leaning on the breast of Jesus (12), saith to him: Lord, who is it? Jesus answered: He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped; and when he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon."

This was not now the Eucharistic bread, which had been entirely consumed; it was a last mark of the tenderness which his Master gave him, by presenting this savory bread. Perhaps the act excited further remorse in the heart of that perfidious man; but Judas stifled it, and made a fixed and irrevocable resolution to consummate the crime he had already projected. It is on this account that it is said that, "after the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him: That which thou dost, do quickly." He thus gave him to under-

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 25; St. Luke, xxii. 23; St. John, xiii. 13–30.

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(10) We know that the ancients, when they took their meals, reclined on couches. These couches had each three seats; the seat in the middle was the most honorable. Those who occupied the seats reclined with the head towards the table, and the feet turned outwards; they leaned upon the right or left side, and the arm which was at liberty was made use of to take the food and convey it to the mouth. He who occupied the middle of the couch had necessarily his countenance turned towards one of those who reclined upon the same couch with him, and his back was turned towards the other occupant. If the person in the middle were the father of the family, the place occupied by the individual towards whom the father of the family had his face turned was called the bosom of the father of the family; it was the place of favor, and was that which Saint John occupied. Alluding to this custom, it is said that Lazarus reposed in the bosom of Abraham.

(11) It appears that Saint Peter reclined on the other side of the couch; it was easy for him, by raising himself a little, to make this sign to Saint John, without catching the eye of Jesus Christ, whose face was turned towards the well-beloved disciple.

(12) It was then that Saint John leaned his head upon the sacred breast of Jesus Christ. We are not aware how long he kept it there; but we know how highly honorable was such an intimacy, were it only to have lasted for an instant.

stand that he neither dreaded the betrayal nor the betrayer. Judas well understood it, but "now no man at the table knew to what purpose he said this unto him (13). For some thought, because Judas had the purse (14), that Jesus had said to him: Buy those things which we have need of for the festival day; or, that he should give something to the poor. He, therefore, having received the morsel, went out immediately; and it was night."

He went at once to execute his fearful project, and his departure may be regarded as the prelude of the mournful scene which was to close with the death of the Holy of Holies. Jesus only viewed it at this moment under the aspect of the infinite glory which it was to procure for his Father and himself. Far, therefore, from being grieved, (*a*) "when [*Judas*], therefore, was gone out, Jesus said," in a transport of joy: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him (15). If God be glorified in him, God also will glorify him in himself, and immediately he will glorify him. And a hymn being said, they went out into Mount Olivet."

(*a*) St. John, xiii. 31, 32; St. Matthew, xxvi. 30.

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(13) Even Saint John did not understand it. He was not ignorant who the traitor was; but he knew not that Judas was so near consummating his treachery, and that the words of the Saviour pointed thereto.

The first cause of the secrecy which Jesus Christ kept with regard to him, was, as we have said, for the purpose of saving his reputation; the second was, that he might not obstruct the work of the redemption, which was to commence by the treachery of Judas. If the apostles got information of what he was plotting, what would they not have done in order to counteract it? And who knows whether Peter's sword would have remained in the scabbard? This latter reason has induced some to think that Jesus Christ, when he revealed it to Saint John, forbade him to tell the others.

(14) Jesus Christ might have intrusted him with this administration, although knowing that Judas would abuse it. Not so with men who cannot, as God, extract good from evil, and much greater good than the foreseen and permitted evil.

(15) The text gives *in eo*, that is to say, literally, *in him* (P. De Ligny translates *par lui—by him*). Those who thus translate explain their version by saying that the divinity personally united to the Son of man, but hitherto not entirely manifested, is about to be manifested by the prodigies which shall accompany his death, resurrection, and ascension, which shall so quickly succeed each other. This explanation is tantamount to this: it is now that God, concealed in the Son of man, is going to be manifested and recognized. We (Pere De Ligny) translate *par lui*, as do the greater number of interpreters: we thus have this sense, which appears simpler and more natural: God, who shall be glorified by the Son of man, is going to glorify him also in his turn.

The disciples were to have part in this glory. Their Master had promised it to them, and he never had to reproach them with incredulity on this head. But each of them sought to be first in this glory, and it hardly ever happened that he spoke to them on the subject without awakening in their hearts this jealousy of each other. Therefore, as it appears on this occasion, (*a*) "there was also a strife amongst them, which of them should seem to be the greater. And he said to them: The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that have power over them are called beneficent. But you are not so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is the greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth (16)."

Thus men should only hold command for the purpose of serving, and if it be allowable to desire authority, this desire can only be entertained with a view to the advantage which may accrue to those over whom the authority is exercised. After this lesson which Jesus had already given to his apostles, and which he merely repeats here, he proposes to them a glory much more solid than all those frivolous distinctions which they, in their blind ambition, sought. For, reminding them of all they had done for him, and for which he in his goodness condescended to give them credit, although they were indebted to that same goodness for being enabled to do it, "he said to them: You are they who have continued with me in my temptations; and I dispose to you, as my Father hath disposed to me, a kingdom; that you may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom; and may sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Then, suffering himself to be softened by the thought that he was about to quit them (*b*) "little children," he said to them with a kindness truly paternal, "yet a little while I am with you: you

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 24–33. (*b*) St. John, xiii. 33–36.

(16) He proves his doctrine by his own uniform practice. They are, in consequence of his demeanor towards them, like a company seated at table, and he like the servant in attendance. Therefore they are like the master, and he like the servant, although, in point of fact, they are the servants and he is their master. See Part II., page 381, *et seq.*

shall seek me, and as I said to the Jews: Whither I go you cannot come; so I say to you now." Hear, then, my last wishes; for, in quitting you, "a new commandment (17) I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

Nothing seems impossible to love, and, therefore, the most fervent of all the disciples considered as at least dubious the truth of this expression of Jesus: "Whither I go you cannot go;" and it was in this frame of mind that "Simon Peter saith to him: Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered: Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow hereafter."

He was to follow him, indeed, in his sufferings and in his glory, but the time for doing so was yet far distant. It was, therefore, with a view to console him that Jesus revealed to him this glorious futurity. But as he wished, at the same time, to humble his presumption, when "Peter saith to him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thee; the Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired (18) to have you, that he

(17) The commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves is as old as the world. We are bound to do so by the law of nature; and even the Pagans were acquainted with it. We find it expressed by Cicero as formally as it is in the Gospel. Much less were the Jews ignorant of it, as appears from the approbation testified by the doctor of the law when the Saviour told him that the precept of loving our neighbor as ourselves is like to the precept of loving God. It is not, therefore, in this sense that this precept is here called a new commandment. Other meanings have been ascribed to it, the most natural of which is the following: Jesus Christ prescribes to his apostles a love still more tender and more generous than that which all men are bound to have for each other—a love truly fraternal, grounded upon the particular quality of Christian, which gives unto them all God for a father, and Jesus Christ for a brother. This is the reason why the Saviour adds that the world should know by this remark that they professed to belong to him. This love was visible when the Church commenced, when *the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul*, and it was still in full force during the first centuries, when the Pagans, enraptured with admiration, exclaimed, as Tertullian reports: *See how the Christians love one another.* If this charity has now waxed very cold, it is not yet utterly extinguished. While there are found individuals so charitable as to give away all their wealth to the poor, and apostolical men who are prodigal of their sweat and blood for the salvation of their brethren, we cannot doubt but that Jesus Christ has still upon earth disciples and imitators of his tender and inexhaustible charity.

(18) As he had asked permission to tempt Job. Satan has no power over us except inasmuch as God grants it to him.

may sift you as wheat (19); but I have prayed for you (20), that thy faith fail not (21); and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren (22)."

Knowing that they would need to be thus confirmed, (*a*) "Then Jesus saith to them: All you shall be scandalized in me this night. For it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed. But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

Peter could not bear that his Master should confound him with the crowd, from which, however, he was only to distinguish himself by a more shameful and a more criminal cowardice. (*b*) "Answering [*therefore*], he said to him: Although all shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized; I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and into death. I will lay down my life for thee. Jesus answered him: Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Amen, amen, I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day (23) till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me. Amen, I say to thee, to-day,

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 31, 32.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 33; St. Luke, xxii. 33, 34; St. John, xiii. 37, 38; St. Mark, xiv. 30.

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(19) That is to say, to tempt you violently; as the grain which is winnowed or sifted is shaken and tossed about.

(20) We can only resist by means of grace, and grace is given to us only because Jesus Christ, who has purchased it for us by the effusion of his blood, asks and obtains it for us.

(21) Peter's faith never failed, but he failed in courage to confess it.

(22) These words give room for believing that Peter, whose conversion followed so soon after his fall, exerted himself immediately to bring back the scattered disciples, and to strengthen their tottering faith. All antiquity has admitted that these words are not only addressed to Saint Peter, but also to his successors, to whom it has been given to constitute after him the foundation-stone which contributes to give to the Church that immovable firmness against which it is said that the gates of hell shall never prevail.

(23) According to one evangelist, the Saviour said: The cock shall not crow this day till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me. According to another evangelist, he said: Before the cock crow *twice* thou shalt deny me thrice. We have combined in the text these two expressions, without being able to decide which of the two the Saviour really used. The cock crowed the first time after the first denial of Saint Peter. Two other denials having followed it, the cock crowed again the second and third time. Thus when it is said, The cock shall not crow this day till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me, means that the cock shall not finish his nightly crowing until thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me.

even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." A man can only become thoroughly acquainted with himself by being put to the proof. Peter, who thought that he loved his Master more than his life, although, in point of fact, he loved his life more than he did his Master, (*a*) "spoke the more vehemently: Although I should die together with thee, I will not deny thee. In like manner also said they all," whether it was that the same presumption urged them to speak thus, or whether they were ashamed to show themselves less resolute than their chief.

The past inspired them with this hope for the future; but that future which they hoped to find like unto the past, was to be of a far different aspect. Jesus, though always exposed to the malignity of the Pharisees, had hitherto retained the love and veneration of the people. The disciples, who had suffered but little from the personal hatred which the Pharisees entertained towards their Master, had reaped in abundance the fruits of the admiration and gratitude so eminently due to him, and which the multitude so willingly rendered. Such was the past, but how very different was the future to be. The people, duped by their magistrates and by their teachers, were to enter into a league with them against the Saviour: the conspiracy was to be general; and after having shown favor to the disciples, because of the Master, they were now going, on his account, to persecute them to the very utmost. It was this alarming change, and the different treatment they were about to receive, that Jesus Christ wished to set before their eyes when he said to them: (*b*) "When I sent you without purse and scrip, and shoes, did you want any thing? But they said: Nothing. Then said he unto them: But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip; and he that hath not, let him sell his coat, and buy a sword. For I say to you, that this that is written must yet be fulfilled in me: And with the wicked was he reckoned (24). For the things

(*a*) St. Mark, xiv. 31; St. Matthew, xxvi. 35. (*b*) St. Luke, xxii. 35–38.

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(24) Jesus Christ, as we have said, was about to be treated like a malefactor, and the world, by whom he was to be so treated, would, consequently, persecute his disciples, as the accomplices of his crimes. This is what the Saviour means when he declares that the moment is come wherein this prophecy is to be accomplished, *and with*

concerning me have an end. And they said: Lord, behold here are two swords; and he said to them: It is enough (25)."

He did not countermand the order which he had previously given them of going without provisions, and of dwelling in the world like sheep in the midst of wolves. But he gave them notice that, after having been regarded as the disciples of the Messiah, they were henceforth to be treated as the accomplices of a malefactor; that the world was about to declare against them that irreconcileable war which should only end with their life, and that hostilities were just on the point of commencing; that they, therefore, stood in need of courage, but that they should not depend too much upon that courage which they evinced by words, inasmuch as it had not as yet been put to the trial. The sword of which he had spoken was only indicative of that state of warfare on which they were going to enter. Peter, who understood it literally, provided himself in reality with a sword. Jesus did not hinder him from so doing, because the use which this impetuous disciple was to make of his weapon was destined to furnish the Saviour with an occasion of further displaying his meekness and his power at the moment of his capture; and he postponed till another opportunity the information that it is not allowable for private individuals to oppose force to public authority, even when it makes a tyrannical use of its rights.

The apostles were troubled at what they had just heard, and it was natural that they should be so. Jesus Christ was on the point of quitting them, without any possibility of their following him. One of their number was to betray him, and even their chief was to

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the wicked was He reckoned. Such is the common explanation; and what most favors this interpretation is, that Saint Mark, after having mentioned that Jesus Christ was crucified between two thieves, immediately quotes this prophecy: *And with the wicked He was reputed.* Some interpreters have explained it in a different manner; according to the latter, Jesus Christ wished his disciples to have swords, because he foresaw that Saint Peter would make use of his sword for the purpose of wounding one of those who came to arrest his Master, and that this violence towards men charged with the execution of an order from the magistrates would be set down as an act of revolt, which would give occasion for arraigning Jesus Christ as the leader of a seditious band. Thus the prophecy which says, *And with the wicked He shall be reputed,* which was accomplished by the crucifixion between two robbers, had also its fulfilment in this circumstance.

(25) That is to say, two swords are enough for the purpose which I have in view.

deny him. The pastor was to be soon struck down, and the sheep, left to themselves, were to wander to and fro, hunted and despised. Weak as they were, we may conceive what sadness and what terror must have filled their souls at the sight of a futurity so near and so terrible. This charitable pastor, more affected by their state than by the evils with which he was menaced, appears to forget himself in order to occupy himself with the care of consoling his beloved disciples. It is with this design that he is going to address to them this admirable discourse of which we have already spoken, in which we may say that his beautiful soul unfolds itself entirely before their eyes—his wisdom and his charity having never appeared with greater lustre. Taking occasion, therefore, from the trouble in which they were, he begins, in order to compose their minds, to speak to them in these terms.

CHAPTER LX.

DISCOURSE AFTER THE SUPPER.—THE DISCIPLES ENCOURAGED AND CONSOLED.—WHO SEETH THE FATHER SEETH THE SON.—THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH PROMISED.

(*a*) "Let not your heart be troubled" at what you have just heard. My promises should dispel your fears. For, as "you believe in God, believe also in me (1)." I am going, as I have said to you, and I have hitherto told Peter only that one day he shall follow me whither I go. Yet this should not alarm you: neither he nor any other could exclude you from that happy abode. "In my Father's house (2) there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you

(*a*) St. John, xiv. 1–31.

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(1) Have in me the same faith and the same confidence which you have in God. This text is one of those which prove the Saviour's divinity.

(2) Although these words do not formally express the inequality of the places founded upon inequality of merit, nevertheless the Catholic Church has always recognized it here; and we now-a-days make use of these words, in order to prove it; Jovinian himself, who thought that the saints in heaven are all equal in glory, admitted that inequality was expressed in this text. His only resource was to apply the text to the Church

that I go to prepare a place for you," and let this proof of my love prevent you from suspecting that I could entertain the design of deceiving you. Do not, therefore, hesitate to believe it, even when you shall see me no more, and rest assured that, "if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to myself; that where I am, you also may be (3). And whither I go you know, and the way you know."

He was going to his Father, and it is through him alone that any one is enabled to go there after him. He had told them this so often, and in so many ways, that they could not be in utter ignorance of the fact. But, either because they did not then remember it, or because they had but a very imperfect idea of the way and the end thereof, "Thomas saith to him: Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith to him: I am the way, and the truth, and the life (4). No man cometh to the Father but by me; if you had known me, you would, without doubt, have known my Father also. From henceforth you shall know him, and you have seen him."

They had seen him, and, notwithstanding, they had yet to know him. That confused knowledge which makes people say indiscriminately, that they know and that they do not know, is sufficient excuse for the apparent contradiction which is found in these modes of speech. They had, therefore, seen the Man-God; they had been witnesses of his deeds; they had heard the words which issued from his adorable lips. Both one and the other emanated from the divinity which dwelt within him, and would have unveiled him to eyes more spiritual than theirs, to eyes sufficiently clear-sighted to

militant and to the different degrees of its hierarchy. Other heretics, such as the Pelagians, make a difference between the mansion and the kingdom. The latter being more excellent, according to them, is destined for those who receive baptism; and the mansion is the dwelling of those children who die without having been baptized, as if the mansion were not in the kingdom, and as if it did not sometimes imply more to be in the mansion than to be in the kingdom; besides, Jesus Christ speaks here to the apostles, who were surely not to be classed with children who have died without baptism.

(3) He shall return at the moment of their death to conduct their souls thither, and at the day of the last judgment, to lead them there, both body and soul.

(4) I am the way which you should follow, the truth which you shall believe, and the life which is to resuscitate you to a life eternal and eternally happy.

discover through the Saviour's humanity, which was merely the instrument of the wonders which he wrought—the divinity which was their source. To see the Son with this perfect vision, would be to see the Father as clearly; and, in this sense, they had seen the Father as well as the Son, inasmuch as the divine nature, which they had only caught a glimpse of in the Son, is the same in the Son as in the Father. Thus it is easy to perceive both what they had and what they still required. In a little time, according to the promise which the Saviour here makes to them, they should require nothing, because the Holy Ghost was then to descend upon them with the plenitude of his light. Impatient to see the effect of this promise, "Philip saith to Jesus: Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus saith to him," in the sense which has just been explained: "So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you I speak not of myself. But the Father that abideth in me he doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake."

His works were, in point of fact, the incontestable proof of the truth of all his words; but it seems that this proof became more sensible to them if they did themselves, by virtue of Jesus Christ, the same things which He had done. And, in giving to whomsoever he wished the power of working miracles, did he not discover his divinity still more clearly than even by those which he himself wrought? It is in this sense that he adds: "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do he shall also do; and greater than these shall he do (5), because I go to the Father; and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son (6). If you shall ask me any thing in my name, that will I do."

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(5) The shadow of Saint Peter cured the sick—a miracle which Jesus Christ never wrought, except by word, or at least by the touch of his sacred garments. But the miracles of the disciples all redound to the glory of the Master, because they were wrought in his name and by his power.

(6) We must pray to the Father through the Son, and to the Son through himself, so

He is, therefore, as powerful, or rather He has the same power, as the Father, since those very same things which are asked from the Father may also be asked from him. What indicates still more clearly this unity of power is, that he does not here say that he shall pray the Father, and that he shall obtain from him for them all that they can desire, but that he himself will confer it upon them. These words, while proving his omnipotence, expressed at the same time the greatness of his love. For what more affecting evidence thereof could he give to them than by offering himself, as he did, to accomplish all their desires, and by rendering them the depositaries of that supreme power which nothing can resist in heaven or on earth? A promise so magnificent could not fail to excite in them some sentiments of gratitude and love. And it is likely that Jesus, who avails himself of every opportunity in order to instruct them, took occasion therefrom to inform them how that love, which they owed him by so just a title, should not stop at sentiment, but must also be manifested by deeds, inasmuch as he added immediately, and without any apparent connection: "If you love me, keep my commandments."

Still this wondrous gift could not indemnify them for his loss: it was necessary for that purpose that Jesus should give them another self in his stead. Having, as God, the power to send him, he may also, as man, pray for his coming; and he promises to do so when he says: "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you (7) another

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that all is through him, and nothing but through him. Such is the belief and the practice of the Church, who never petitions for any thing, but in the name and through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. A motive this, of the most profound humility—by myself I am unworthy of any thing. A motive of the most perfect confidence—through Jesus Christ I can obtain all; confidence and humility, two dispositions, which should always accompany prayer.

It would be abusing this doctrine, if we suffered it to weaken the confidence which we have in the intercession of the saints. We are only the more humble for believing that the saints are more agreeable than we to Jesus Christ, and we have not the less confidence in Jesus Christ, because we still believe that it is only through Him that the saints pray, and that their prayers are heard. We should be Calvinists or Iconoclasts, did we say *we withdraw ourselves from Jesus Christ when we pray to his members, which are also ours, his children, who are also our brothers, and his saints, who are our first-fruits, to pray with us and for us to our common Master, in the name of our common Mediator.*—Bossuet's Exposition of Catholic Doctrine.

(7) It is he who obtains him for us by his merits. No one had merited that the Son

Paraclete (8), that he may abide with you forever (9). The Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive (10), because it seeth him not, nor knoweth him. But you shall know him, because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you."

Between the promise and the accomplishment little more than fifty days was to elapse. The term, therefore, was not far distant, and their patience was not to have too long a trial. However, the Saviour did not wish to leave them under the impression that they should, during all that time, have to mourn his absence; and, by an impulse of that paternal tenderness which induced him to call them his little children, he further said, announcing to them the near approach of his resurrection: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more;

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should be sent; but the Son has merited the sending, or the mission of the Holy Ghost. We have just seen that Jesus Christ could say positively, *I will send*, without saying, *I will ask*, as he had said before, Whatsoever you shall ask the Father, *I will ask* him, and he shall give you; whereas he says absolutely, Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, *that will I do*. It is thus that he speaks, sometimes as God, sometimes as man, in order to testify the existence of both natures.

(8) We read in the text, *another Paraclete:* Jesus Christ is, therefore, our Paraclete, since he saith that the Holy Ghost is another. The Greek word from whence this is derived has three significations in the New Testament: it means to console, to exhort, and to perform the office of Advocate. In these three senses it applies to Jesus Christ, and in the first two significations it applies also to the Holy Ghost, to whom the name of Advocate cannot be applicable, inasmuch as it only belongs to Jesus Christ, on account of his humanity, by which he is become mediator between God and man. God, as God, cannot be called our Advocate; for before whom could he plead our cause? *P. De Ligny translates the word into French by "Consolateur." He adds to this note that he translates thus, with the majority of commentators:* On a traduit par *Consolateur* avec la plupart des interprètes.

The Holy Ghost was to console the apostles for the absence of Jesus Christ. He was also to be their consoler, in the midst of the toils which they had to undergo, and the persecutions of which they were to bear the brunt.

(9) The apostles were going to be deprived of the pleasure of living with Jesus Christ, but the consoling Spirit was never to abandon them. When he promised that the Holy Ghost should dwell eternally in their souls, Jesus Christ promised to them that they should never lose grace, but there is reason to think that they did not then understand this promise.

(10) Truth is here set forth, in opposition to vanity and falsehood, which renders it utterly incompatible with the world, which is essentially vain and false.

You will say that the world might possibly receive the Holy Ghost, but then it would cease to be what is called the world, in the Gospel.

but you see me, because I live and you shall live (11). In that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you (12)." And because in one sense this concerns us no less than the disciples, to whom Jesus then addressed his discourse, let us remark the condition to which he attaches his favors: "He," said he, "that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me (13). And he that loveth me shall be

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(11) Death was soon to withdraw him forever from the eyes of the world, but not from the eyes of his disciples, to whom he was to show himself immediately after his resurrection. We may believe that he said in this sense, I live, for a death so brief might really be called a sleep only, as the Saviour terms it himself, speaking of the death of Jairus's daughter, and of the death of Lazarus, whom he was going to restore to life. What he adds, *You shall live,* is understood to refer to the assurance he gives his disciples, that the rage of his persecutors shall not extend to them, in pursuance of the prohibition which he would lay upon them, when, at the moment of his capture, he said unto them, "*If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way.*"

(12) They saw after his resurrection that his Father was in him, because his divinity was rendered so manifest to them, that there was not one of them, nay, not even the incredulous disciple, who did not confess that he was his Lord and his God. Now, to see his divinity so clearly, was to see just as plainly that the divine nature was common to him with his Father, and, consequently, that he is in his Father, and that his Father is in him, as he says himself elsewhere. They shall know, moreover, that they are in him and that he is in them, because, having participated in flesh and blood by his incarnation, he has made himself to be of the same nature with them. Besides, being their head, and they his members, they are animated by the same spirit, and live by the same supernatural life as he, which the reader shall see more fully explained in the similitude of the vine and its branches. These truths were not utterly unknown to them before the Saviour's Passion; but they began to comprehend them better after his resurrection, the lustre of his resuscitated body having commenced to shed a new light on their minds. The new instruction then given by their Divine Master contributed also to this end; for, after they had seen with their eyes their Lord and their God, they learned from his lips that he who was their Lord and their God, was, at the same time, their brother, and his Father their Father.

(13) *Man knoweth not whether he is worthy of love or of hatred.* He does not know, therefore, whether he loves, for were he assured that he loves, he would also be equally assured that he is beloved. He is not, therefore, assured that he keeps the commandments; for, after this expression of Jesus Christ, he could no longer doubt, if he kept the commandments, whether he loves God, or whether he is loved by him. However, man should believe himself as equally assured that he loves God, as he can be that he keeps his commandments. Some Christians are uneasy because they do not feel a sensible love; others compose themselves into a state of confidence, because they have a sensible affection for God. These are mistaken, both of them, since in Jesus Christ's judgment this love is decided by the commandments being kept or not kept.

loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him (14)."

"Judas, not the Iscariot," but he who was otherwise called Thaddeus, the brother of James, and cousin of the Lord, "saith to him: Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?" The reason is, because they loved him, whereas the world hated him. For such is the sense comprised in these words, which Jesus again repeated: "If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him (15). He that loveth me not keepeth not my words." But if he have not love for me, neither hath he any love for my Father, and he should no longer expect to be loved either by Him or by Me. For "the word which you have heard is not mine, but the Father's who sent me."

All this contains a profound meaning, which the apostles were not as yet capable of penetrating. Jesus, who spoke it, however, that it might be understood, promised them that they should yet understand it, in the following words: "These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things (16), and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you (17)."

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(14) In order to love God, we must know him. God makes himself more fully known to those who love him. Greater knowledge produces greater love, which, in its turn, is rewarded by a fresh increase of knowledge. The tree springs from the seed thereof, and both one and the other, by their mutual reproduction, increase and multiply almost infinitely.

(15) God is everywhere, but he has three special dwellings: heaven, where he shows himself unveiled; the temples, wherein he receives our homage; and the souls of the just, wherein he continually operates by grace. The latter may well be termed his temples: "*Ye are the temples of the living God,*" saith Saint Paul. Well might they sometimes be called heaven also, on account of the wondrous light which God vouchsafes to shed upon them. Saint Paul leaves it doubtful whether it was not during one of these interior illuminations that he was carried in spirit to the third heaven, and there "*heard sacred words, which it is not granted to man to utter.*"—II. Cor. xii. 4.

(16) Jesus Christ might confer the Holy Ghost upon the apostles at the same time that he instructed them; he did not choose to do so, in order that they might learn that exterior preaching produces no effect, except by the interior action of the Holy Ghost, and that they might not be tempted to attribute to their preaching the fruits which it was soon to produce.

(17) See page 236 Part I.

Being so near his departure from them, he once more bids them farewell in these terms: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." It is thought that this was very nearly the usual form of farewell amongst the Jews. It was only a civil expression with them; but, on the part of the Saviour, it was a real present. He actually gave what they could merely wish; and the peace which he gave was much more genuine and precious than that which they wished each other. It is on this account that he adds: "Not as the world giveth do I give unto you."

But the apostles were not then in a condition to relish the sweetness of that peace. The idea of the separation—which separation these words forcibly recalled to their mind—caused them at this moment a sadness and trouble which the Saviour condescended to soothe by these words: "Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I said to you, I go away, and I come unto you." The assurance of my return should enable you to bear my absence. You would even desire it if you were more enlightened than you are, and if you had for me the love which you ought to have. Yes, "if you loved me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I (18)," and he calls me to himself solely for the purpose of associating me in his dominion, and sharing with me his power. If he wishes that I should reach it by the way of sufferings and opprobrium, far from being scandalized thereat, remember ye that "now I have told ye before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass, you may believe. I will not now speak many things to you; for the prince of this world cometh, and in me he hath not any thing (19). But that

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(18) Jesus Christ spoke thus because of his humanity, according to the common explanation, which is quite sufficient to silence Arians. The ancient fathers, and especially the Greek fathers, thought that the Saviour might have also said this with reference to his divinity, on account of a certain superiority, which we fancy to ourselves, according to our own conceptions, in him who is the principle, over him who proceeds from him, in him who engenders, over him who is engendered, in the Father, over the Son. This was, as we see, without prejudice to the equality and identity of nature, so that heresy could derive no advantage from this explanation; but heresy might make a bad use of it, and it is always safe to confine ourselves to the former.

(19) It is sin which has given to the devil the empire of death; he therefore had no right over him who never sinned, who could only die voluntarily and of his own free-will,

the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me the commandment, so do I: Arise, let us go hence (20)."

CHAPTER LXI.

SEQUEL OF THE DISCOURSE.—JESUS CHRIST IS THE TRUE VINE.—WE ARE TO PERSEVERE IN CHARITY.—PERSECUTIONS FORETOLD.—TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

It is not easy to say very exactly in what place Jesus Christ spoke, and from whence he then departed. Many think that he was still in the supper chamber, where he had eaten the paschal lamb, and that it was from it he now went forth. Others think that he did not leave it at this moment; and although he had said, "Arise, let us go hence," that he remained there, notwithstanding, until he had concluded the long discourse which he had commenced, and a great part of which was yet unspoken: this supposition is very improbable. As for us, confining ourselves to the letter, we have already stated that, immediately after the supper, they all joined in the canticle of thanksgiving, and that they immediately set out, taking the way towards Mount Olivet. We must, therefore, infer that the discourse was pronounced upon the way, partly while walking on, and partly whilst stopping, either upon the road itself, or under some shelter which they met. We shall find no difficulty here if we remember that they walked outside of the city, and during night—that is to say, in a time and in a place where the Saviour could not

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(20) There is a colon in the text after these words: "*But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father hath given me commandment, so do I.*" This colon, in the place where it is, renders the phrase imperfect, and has caused some to think that there was a deficiency here; but by changing this punctuation, and joining what precedes to these latter words, "*arise, let us go hence,*" we have this natural sense, so conformable to the Saviour's mode of thinking and of speaking: "*But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father hath given me commandment, so do I arise: let us go hence,*" in order to proceed to that death to which he sends me. However, we would not have taken this liberty, had we not been authorized to do so by the example of skilful interpreters.—(*Père De Ligny.*)

be interrupted by the throng of passers-by. Wherefore, after having stopped a while, he arose with his disciples, and resumed his journey and his discourse.

Nothing had greater interest for them than the new mystery which he was about to disclose to them. It is that of the union, and, if we may dare to use the expression, of the incorporation of all the faithful with the Man-God, by which he makes himself their head, and they become his members, constituting but one body with him, animated by the same spirit, and living by the same life. Thus is formed the entire Christ, composed of the head and members, as branches, attached to the trunk, springing from the same root, and nourished by the same sap, form with it but one and the same tree, for such is the comparison which the Saviour makes, pursuing thus his discourse:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman (1). Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he will take away (2); and every one that beareth fruit, he will purge it (3), that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you (4). Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing (5). If any one remain-

(1) Jesus Christ is also the husbandman, but he speaks of this with reference to his Father only, because it was proper that, in the parable, the vine-dresser should be distinguished from the vine. He calls himself the *true* vine, in order to signify that the union of the vine with the branches is still but an imperfect figure of the union of Jesus Christ with his members, and of the admirable manner in which he communicates to them life and fecundity.

(2) It shall be separated, in this life, from my mystic body, by heresy or by excommunication; or, if it still remain attached by faith, it shall be separated in the other life at least by reprobation.

(3) He will prune them. If the branch were sensitive, what would it not say against the hand who prunes it without mercy? But if it were rational, could it complain of those salutary wounds which procure for it glory and fruitfulness, and which preserve it from the fire to which it had been justly condemned on account of its sterility?

(4) We have in the text, *by reason of the word which I have spoken to you.* This is the evangelical word, the preaching of which produced faith which was followed by justification.

(5) This expression, and we might, indeed, say the whole of this parable, gives a mortal blow to Pelagianism; it was the fundamental dogma of that heresy that grace is not

eth not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither. They shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth (6). If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done to you. In this is my Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples."

This parable could not have a more suitable place than that wherein Jesus Christ proposed it. His disciples, who were upon the point of being deprived of his sensible presence, might easily forget him, and detach themselves from him. It was, therefore, necessary that they should be aware how closely it concerned their own interest to remain always united to him by faith and charity. This is the import of the parable, in which, besides several incidental truths, we find associated all the motives capable of inducing the apostles to rivet as closely as they can the bonds which unite them to their Divine Master—to wit, that of honor; it concerns them to avoid the shame of sterility, and to procure for themselves the glory of a happy fecundity: that of fear; if they detach themselves from this mystic vine, or if they deserve to be cut off therefrom, fire shall be their inevitable lot and their eternal punishment: that of self-interest; for the Saviour, being sensible of their attachment, makes them depositaries of his power and arbiters of his graces; all they require is, to

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necessary in order to perform good actions, and that at most it only facilitates the performance thereof. No, says Jesus Christ, without me, that is to say, without my grace, you can absolutely do nothing; and, in point of fact, it is not in order to fructify more easily or more abundantly that the sapling is attached to the vine—it is simply in order that it may fructify; without this union it would be equally impossible for it to bear fruit, either more or less.

This expression, *you can do nothing*, does not exclude all actions, but only such as are conducive to salvation. It would be an abuse of the expression to conclude therefrom that all the acts of the unfaithful are sins. Between sins and actions meriting eternal life there exists a medium, viz., actions morally good, but which, in the order of salvation, have neither value nor merit. Saint Paul said well, that all that he could do without charity would profit him nothing, but he does not say that it would be hurtful to him.

(6) In the text it is in the present, *and he burneth* (P. De Ligny translates the phrase into the future of the French verb "bruler," *et il brulera*); this is in order to signify the incredible activity of this devouring fire, which burns in an instant all that it touches. We also find its infinite duration expressed here by this present, always to come and always present, *and he burneth.*

desire and to ask, and their wishes shall be instantly accomplished: lastly, that of gratitude; God shall be glorified by the fruits of justice and holiness which they shall produce, as the fruits whereby a tree is crowned are at the same time the glory of the tree and of him who cultivates it. This is only a figurative repetition of what the Saviour had said to them long before, viz., that seeing their good works, men would refer the glory thereof to their heavenly Father, as the author of all the good which might be in them.

The Saviour again reverts to what he had already said to them, in order to impress it still more deeply upon their minds. He repeats to them, therefore, that they must always remain united to him, by the observance of his commandments, and inasmuch as all the commandments are comprised in charity, which comprises the love of God and of our neighbor: "As the Father hath loved me," he said to them, "I also (7) have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love, as I also have kept my Father's commandments (8), and do abide in his love (9). These things I have spoken to you (10), that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled; this is my commandment: That you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends (11).

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(7) That is to say, gratuitously and without there being on your part any preceding merit which bound me to it: it is thus that the Father loved the Saviour's holy humanity, when, in advance of all merit, he chose it to be united to the Word by unity of person. Jesus Christ speaks here as man, and the comparison which he draws between his love for his disciples and the love which his Father has for him, should be understood as indicative of similar gratuitousness, and not of love equal in its degrees and effects.

(8) *By making himself obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross.* He undoubtedly received the commandment to do so, since where there is no commandment there is no obedience.

(9) The love of the Father was for the Son an inalienable good which he could never lose; nevertheless, the Son has done more in order to preserve it, than he requires from us in order that we may retain his love. The condition is similar, and it is less rigorous: who would dare to complain of it?

(10) That joy of complacency which a good father feels when he sees his children docile to his salutary advice. You yourselves rejoice to know that I rejoice in you, and this holy joy, which shall be henceforward the fruit of your docility, shall one day receive from your perseverance its plenitude and its perfection.

(11) Such has been my love for you—such is that which you ought to have for one another. This conclusion is here understood; Saint John elsewhere expresses it formal-

You are my friends if you do the things that I command you. I will not now call you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth; but I have called you friends, because all things (12) whatsoever I have heard from my Father, I have made known (13) to you. You have not chosen me; but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain; that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that you love one another."

What induces him to repeat it to them here is, that union of hearts is absolutely necessary for those who are to concur in the success of a great enterprise; but this unanimity, which facilitates the means, is not alone sufficient to surmount all difficulties. Patience is also necessary, and none ever required it more than the apostles, destined as they were to encounter the fury of the entire world. Jesus Christ recommends this virtue to them, or rather he exhorts them to it by the most affecting of all motives, viz., his own example, which he proposes to them in these terms: "If the world hate you, know ye that it hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own (14); but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world

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ly, when he says (I. Ep. iii.): *We have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

The charity of Jesus Christ went still further. He has not given his life for his friends only, but, saith Saint Paul (Rom. v.), *God commendeth his charity towards us; because when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us.* We have already seen under what circumstances it becomes a matter of obligation, or when it is merely a matter of perfection, to give our life for our neighbor. See note 7, page 182, Part I.

(12) We issue orders to servants, without being bound to disclose to them our motives; but we tell our secrets to our friends.

(13) *All* only refers here to those things which concern religion and salvation. Jesus Christ had not already communicated all those things, since he soon after says to the apostles: *I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.* But he had communicated a part of them, and he will shortly communicate the rest. Thus, *I have made known to you,* signifies in this place, *I have commenced, and I shall soon finish making known to you,* either by myself, or by the Holy Ghost whom I shall send you, all that my Father hath told me.

(14) Not that people do not often hate each other in the world, but the world ever sympathizes with the corrupt morals of those who belong to it; whereas it has a natural and eternal antipathy to the pure morality of virtuous people.

hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: the servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake (15), because they know not him that sent me (16)."

And this ignorance does not excuse them, because it is voluntary. "If I had not come, and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." They do not comprehend the enormity thereof, because they think they hate me only; but "he that hateth me, hateth my Father also (17)." I say again: "If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But that the word may be fulfilled which is written in their law: They hated me without cause."

But their hatred shall not prevail against the truth which it made them disown; for "when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father (18), the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from

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(15) Not only shall you be persecuted like me, but you shall be persecuted on my account. The first is a source of consolation for your pains, the second is a subject of joy and of triumph in the midst of the greatest contumely. *They indeed went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus* (Acts v.). *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things* (I. Pet. iv. 15).

(16) They know one God, the Creator of Heaven and of Earth, but they do not know him only as the Father of Jesus Christ, since they disown his Son; nor as the Author of Christ's mission, since they reject his Envoy. They do not know God, since they do not recognize him; that is to say, since they do not acknowledge his power in the miracles of Jesus Christ, or his sanctity in the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

(17) Nothing is more rare than direct hatred towards God, nothing is more common than indirect hatred. We hate God indirectly, as legislator and as judge, when we hate the law which he imposes upon us, and his justice which punishes the transgression of that law. Hatred of the religion which he has revealed, of the Church which he has founded, of the ministers whom he has established, is, of all indirect hatred, that which approaches nearest to direct hatred.

(18) All the works which God produces exteriorly are equally the work of the three divine persons. However, it often happens that we attribute them, by appropriation, to one of the three. Thus, Creation is attributed to the Father, Redemption to the Son, and Sanctification to the Holy Ghost. We say, with reference to one of the persons, that this person is sent, when the divine work is one of those operations which are appropriated to him; which, however, is said only with reference to the persons who *proceed*. Thus, the Son is sent by the Father from whom he proceeds, and the Holy Ghost

the Father, he shall give testimony of me; and you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning (19).

(*a*) "These things" which you shall have to suffer with me, and for me, "have I spoken to you, that you may not be scandalized." You must, therefore, be prepared to bear it. "They will put you out of the synagogues. Yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever kill-

(*a*) St. John, xvi. 1–15.

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is sent by the Father and by the Son; but the Father from whom the two other persons proceed, and who proceeds from no one, is never said to be sent. But if the Son said of himself, the spirit of the Lord is upon me, * * he hath *sent* me to evangelize the poor, it should only be understood with reference to the Saviour's humanity, according to which he might in reality have been sent by the Holy Ghost; for if we merely consider in him the divinity, as he is the principle of the Holy Ghost who proceeds from him, it is he who sends the Holy Ghost, as he says expressly in this passage, and it is no longer permissible to say that the Holy Ghost sent him.

This expression, *whom I will send you*, has always been made use of to prove that the Holy Ghost proceeds *from the Son*. And as it is said, immediately after, *who proceedeth from the Father*, we have in this single text the refutation of two heresies, viz., of that which made the Holy Ghost proceed from the Son and not from the Father, and of that which made him proceed from the Father and not from the Son. It is well known that the second is the heresy of the Greeks: the first is but little known. Saint Basil has opposed it in Eunomius, as may be seen *lib. II. contra Eunomium, in fine.*

(19) St. Augustin says that the testimony rendered by the apostles is the testimony of the Holy Ghost, which is here spoken of. That is true, but it is not all. Indeed, the Holy Ghost directed and inspired the apostles in the testimony which they rendered to Jesus, according to this expression: *It is not you who speak; it is the spirit of your Father who speaketh in you.* And in this sense the testimony of the apostles is also that of the Holy Ghost. But this divine Spirit hath also rendered his particular testimony utterly independent of that of the apostles: this occurred when he descended upon them in the form of fiery tongues, and communicated to them the gift of language. He repeated this testimony every time he descended in a visible manner upon the newly baptized Christians, and communicated to them the same gift. Such is the divine testimony which was rendered by the Holy Ghost. The testimony of the apostles, inasmuch as they were inspired by the same spirit, was also divine. But it was, at the same time, human testimony founded upon that which they had *heard* with their ears, *seen* with their eyes, and *touched* with their hands, as Saint John expresses himself (I. Ep. i.). And it is in this sense that Jesus Christ thus speaks of it, when he says: You shall give testimony, *because you are with me from the beginning.* The first testimony was necessary, in order to oblige men to believe divine truths; the second was accommodated to the nature of man, and to his manner of proceeding in the verification of facts, viz., proof by witness. The combination of both leaves no species of testimony wanting to Jesus Christ.

eth you will think that he doth a service to God (20). And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father nor me. But these things I have told you, that when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you of them.

"But I told you not these things from the beginning (21), because I was with you," and that, supported by my presence, you had no need of being cautioned; besides, that the first effects of this hatred must fall upon me alone. "Now I go to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?" I know that this is not from indifference. "But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath [*so*] filled your heart," that you have not strength to speak. "But I tell you the truth." However advantageous my presence may be to you, "it is expedient to you that I go (22); for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you (23). And when he is come, he will con-

(20) Christian and Catholic magistrates and princes have believed that they rendered a service to God by persecuting, as impious men, those who opposed the Christian and Catholic faith, and in this they were not deceived. On the other hand, infidel or heretic rulers have imagined that they served God when persecuting those who professed or defended the Christian or Catholic faith, and in believing so they were grievously mistaken. It is not so much the pain endured as the cause for which it is endured, which constitutes the difference between the martyr and the obdurate fanatic. In like manner, it is not the pain inflicted, but the cause for which it is inflicted, which makes the difference between the impious persecutor and the zealous defender. God is so just that he will take ignorance as some excuse for the enemies of his religion, and even for the murderers of his prophets: *Forgive them, for they know not what they do.* He is so patient that he spares even those who dare to say that the defence of his cause concerns only himself, and that princes (though his vicegerents on earth) have no right to interfere on his behalf.

(21) Jesus Christ had already foretold more than once to his disciples the persecutions which they should have to encounter. What he here tells them for the first time is, that they shall be persecuted and put to death, because they shall be regarded as impious and enemies of God; which scornful imputation and unmerited punishment must, of course, be very distressing to these virtuous men. It is to this latter circumstance that we may refer these words: *I told you not these things from the beginning.*

(22) The apostles could only be indemnified for the loss of a God by the coming of a God. Therefore the Holy Ghost is God, says Saint Chrysostom, who drew this conclusion against Macedonius.

(23) It might, indeed, have occurred that the Holy Ghost should come, and that Jesus Christ should send him, although Jesus Christ did not quit the earth; but this would not have been in accordance with the order of the divine decrees. According to this order, each of the persons was to appear in his turn in the work of the divine re-

vince (24) the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment"—that is to say (if we may venture to interpret such mysterious words), when the Paraclete comes, he shall convince the world that it is sinful (25), that I am just, or rather, that I am justice itself, and that on the day of the last judgment, I, who am to be its judge, because I am the conqueror and the judge of its prince—I shall display before its eyes the overwhelming contrast of its crimes with my innocence, and of my justice with its iniquity. Thus the world shall know at last what it is, what I am, and what it has to expect.

The Holy Ghost will, therefore, convince the world "of sin," adds the Saviour, reverting to what he had already said, "because they believed not in me; of justice, because I go to the Father, and you shall see me no longer (26); and of judgment, because the prince of this world is already judged (27)."

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demption and of the sanctification of men. The Father had commenced it by sending his only Son, and by uniting him to human nature through the incarnation. The incarnate Word had enlightened the world by his doctrine, and redeemed it by his death; it was necessary that he should disappear, and that he should leave, if we may venture so to speak, the world unoccupied, so that the Holy Ghost might exhibit himself therein in his quality of man's sanctifier, and as the consummator of the work of the Father and the Son. We also deduce from hence the divinity of the Holy Ghost, for there was no one but a God who could perfect the work of God.

(24) To convince, signifies to give proof sufficiently conclusive not to leave any reasonable ground of objection. This does not hinder people from being still incredulous, but it renders them inexcusable.

The most conclusive of all proof which the apostles gave, were the miracles which the Holy Ghost operated through their ministry.

(25) All men are sinners, and cease to be so only by faith in Jesus Christ. Wherefore those who do not believe in Him, remain necessarily and irremediably sinful.

(26) Jesus Christ, by quitting the earth and ascending into heaven by his own power, has shown that he was more than man, and very far from being, as the world had considered him, merely a sinful man, and guilty to the extent of deserving extreme punishment.

(27) The prince of this world is the devil. Dispossessed of the temples wherein he was adored; reduced to silence in the places where he had delivered his oracles, or to the forced confession of Jesus Christ's divinity by the mouth of demoniacs from whose bodies he was expelled—this spirit of darkness was manifestly vanquished, and, consequently, judged and condemned. Therefore the world, his worshipper and his slave, could no longer avoid being judged and condemned in its turn.

These three truths, proved by the apostles, that is to say, by the Holy Ghost, who inspired the preaching of the apostles, and who was the author of their miracles, proved also those truths which Jesus Christ has just proposed, taken in the sense that we have given to them.

By these last words the Saviour entered into mysteries which were as yet beyond the reach of the disciples. This it is which makes him then say to them: "I have yet many things to say to you (28), but you cannot bear them now. But," he adds, in order to increase in them the desire of the coming of the Holy Ghost, by inspiring them with the desire of being thoroughly instructed in all which it behooved them to know—"but when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but what things soever he shall hear he shall speak (29), and the things that are to come he shall show you (30). He shall glorify me, because he shall receive of mine, and shall show it to you (31)."

It is true that all which he has comes from the Father; but "all things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore I said that he shall receive of mine, and shall show it to you."

These words are easily understood, if the Son be the principle of the Holy Ghost; but if he were not, they would be unintelligible. The procession of the divine persons is, therefore, clearly known, and we may say that the Saviour here completes the revelation thereof.

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(28) See note 13, page 480, Part II.

(29) The Holy Ghost spoke only what he heard from the Son, as the Son only does what he sees the Father do: figures of speech which signify that the Holy Ghost receives knowledge from the Son as the Son receives power from the Father.

(30) The gift of prophecy is promised by these words. The apostles had it, and they were not the only individuals who had it, since Saint Paul distinguishes different classes of apostles, of prophets, of doctors, &c. The apostles combined within themselves all these qualities which are found divided amongst others.

(31) The Holy Ghost received from the Son all divine knowledge with the divine essence. But he has not communicated it all to the apostles, human nature being incapable of receiving such a communication; and it is with reference to the portion which he communicates to them that the Saviour said: *He shall receive of mine, and shall show it to you*, which is tantamount to this: He shall receive from me what he shall announce to you.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE END OF THE DISCOURSE.—JOY PROMISED AFTER SORROW.—JESUS PRAYS FOR HIMSELF AND FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

Consoled in their sufferings by the visit and by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the disciples shall also be finally consoled by their reunion with their beloved Master. The expectation thereof was not to be of very long duration; it was only to last during this life, so short in itself, and which is merely a moment, if we compare it with eternity. It is apparently in this sense that Jesus further said to them: (*a*) "A little while, and now you shall not see me; and again a little while, and you shall see me; because I go to the Father."

The first of these two periods is that which was to elapse before his ascension. The second period was from the ascension of the Saviour till the death of the apostles—that day when he was to receive them with open arms, and carry up unto his very throne their souls, then victorious over hell and the world. What he adds concerning his return to the Father refers to two things. Inasmuch as he was soon to ascend thither, his disciples must then lose sight of him; but inasmuch as he went thither for the purpose of preparing a place for them, his departure was to them a guarantee for his return, and the cause of their affliction became the foundation of their hope. All this had been announced, but not developed; and if it had for the disciples the certainty of oracles, it had also their obscurity, at least for the majority amongst them. "Then some of his disciples said one to another: What is this that he saith to us? A little while and you shall not see me; and again a little while and you shall see me; and because I go to the Father. They said, therefore: What is this that he saith? We know not what he speaketh."

"Jesus knew that they had a mind to ask him, and he said to

(*a*) St. John, xvi. 16–33.

them: Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while and you shall not see me; and again a little while and you shall see me. Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

Without fixing the duration of these two periods, Jesus makes them understand that the time of his absence shall be one of affliction to them, which affliction shall be followed by joy at his return. Their condition in this respect is very different from that of the lovers of the world, who commence with joy and end with sorrow. Let the Saviour's disciples, therefore, leave the lovers of the world to revel in their short and frivolous joys; and, instead of regarding them with envy, let them consider that the evils of the present life are like unto the labor by which they bring forth a second life, which is to be one of infinite joy and endless happiness, as the Saviour makes manifest by this comparison, which should serve as a consolation to all just souls laboring under sorrow or affliction: "A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now, indeed, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you. And in that day you shall not ask me any thing (1)."

But when once they are separated from a master so beneficent and so powerful, to whom shall they have recourse in their necessities? The Saviour is about to relieve them from this last anxiety. There is a means of obtaining more favors in his absence than they did obtain during the time that he dwelt amongst them. This means, hitherto unknown, was at last to be manifested to the world. Jesus, who had already indicated it, makes it thoroughly known by these words: "Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father any

(1) If we refer this expression to what has been previously said, it will signify, *you shall ask me no further questions.* If we connect it with what immediately follows, it will mean, *you shall make no further prayer to me.* The majority of interpreters follow the first of these explanations. Those who see God face to face, no longer desire any information. It is true that they have no longer any wants to expose; but if they can no longer pray for themselves, they may still pray, and do incessantly pray, for us.

thing in my name, he will give it to you." Accustomed to address your prayers to me alone, "hitherto you have not asked any thing in my name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full," by the entire accomplishment of your desires.

Jesus at last terminates this long instruction with the renewed promise of a clearer manifestation of the divine secrets: "These things, said he, I have spoken to you in proverbs: the hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but will show you plainly of the Father," either by myself or by the Spirit whom I shall send to you. "In that day you shall ask in my name; and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you (2);" even were it possible that I did not do so, you would still be heard; "for the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me (3), and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and I go to the Father (4)."

The Saviour had often before spoken as clearly as he has just done, and, notwithstanding, he had not been understood. But whether the repetition of the same things had rendered them more intelligible, or whether he had accompanied his last words with an extraordinary light, which supplied the defect of capacity in his hearers, "His disciples say to him: Behold, now thou speakest plain-

(2) Jesus Christ, in heaven, is *always living* to make intercession for us (Heb. vii.). However, the Church never says to him, as to the saints, *pray for us*, but have mercy on us. The reason is, says the Abbé Rupert, because the intercession of Jesus Christ is not like that of the saints, an humble and suppliant prayer, but a representation of our wants and of his rights made by Him who, although he made himself like to us, is not the less equal to God.

(3) The love which God has for us necessarily precedes that which we have for God. We never could love him if he did not first love us. But our love makes him love us still more. Perhaps it might be more desirable to say that the first love which God entertained towards us was merely beneficence, and that our love causes the love of complacency to succeed to this beneficence, in the heart of God; and it is with reference to this second love that it is said: *My Father loveth you because you have loved me.*

(4) The Word was in the world before he left the bosom of the Father; and he did not quit his Father's bosom when he appeared to leave it, in order to come into the world. Always and everywhere present by his immensity, he merely manifested himself where he had not been visible. The Man-God has not quitted the world, though he left it to return to his Father; always present upon earth under the eucharistic species, he merely ceased to be visible where he had before been visible.

ly, and speakest no proverb. Now we know that thou knowest all things, and thou needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou comest forth from God. Jesus answered them: Do you now believe?" I know that you do; but such is still the feebleness of your faith, that "behold the hour cometh, and it is now come, that you shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." And, in order to keep before their eyes the principal object of his discourse, he closed with these words: "These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace," from the certainty that nothing shall occur, either to you or to me, which shall not eventually turn out to my advantage and to yours. "In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world (5)."

(*a*) "These things Jesus spoke, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said: Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee, as (6) thou hast given him power over all flesh (7),

(*a*) St. John, xvii. 1–26.

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(5) The world was not entirely disarmed by the victory which Jesus Christ achieved over it; but it is so weakened thereby, that it can conquer those only who do not choose to defend themselves.

What strength the world still retains has been left to it only in order to signalize the courage of its conquerors, and its weakness is the reproach of those who become its slaves.

(6) *As* relates to this expression, *Glorify thy Son;* it expresses the measure of the glory for which Jesus Christ asks. This glory must be proportioned to the power which his Father has communicated to him. Now this power being extended over all flesh, that is to say, unlimited, it is fitting that the glory which accompanies it should also be unlimited, because *Christ Jesus humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even unto the death of the Cross; God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father* (Philip. ii.).

(7) We find in the text, *all flesh*, an expression by which interpreters have always understood, *all men.* It is subsequently said, *that he may give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him.* He gives, therefore, eternal life to all flesh—that is to say, to all men, which shows that he does not here speak of eternal life consummated, but only of eternal life commenced, or as Saint Cyril explains it, of the root and origin of eternal life, viz., the knowledge of one true God, and of Jesus Christ in the quality of Messiah, as the Saviour himself is about to inform us. Such is the eternal life which he has given

that he may give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (8). I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with thee (9)."

After having prayed for himself, he is now going to pray for his disciples. The greater length of the discourse, and the exquisite tenderness of the expressions, would almost make us believe that he takes a greater interest in their happiness than in his own. It is, therefore, exclusively for them that he thus continues to address his Father: "I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou hast given me out of the world. Thine they were, and to me thou hast given them; and they have kept thy word. Now, they have known that all things which thou hast given me are from thee; because the words thou gavest me I have given to them: they have received them, and have known in very deed that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them; I

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to all men—that is to say, which he has offered to them, so that on his side nothing has been wanting which was necessary in order that all men might obtain it.

(8) Eternal life, that is to say, faith, which is the root thereof, has for fundamental dogmas the existence of one only God, and the mission of Jesus Christ as Saviour of the world. The second dogma was to be proposed to the Jews, who already believed the first, and both were to be proposed to the Gentiles, who were ignorant of both. To recognize the Father as the only true God is not excluding from the divinity they who constitute one and the same God with the Father. The Son and the Holy Ghost are not, therefore, excluded by this text; and the Arians, who sought to avail themselves of it, could turn it to no account.

If Jesus Christ is the ambassador of God, we should, therefore, have faith in all his words, and believe that he is God, if he has elsewhere said that he is God. Wherefore all that could be concluded from this text is, that the divinity of Jesus Christ is neither proved nor contradicted by it, and we are not the less bound to believe it, supposing that it is proved by other texts.

The Ancient Fathers have proved the divinity by this same text. They translate it thus: *This is eternal life, that they may know thee, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, as the only true God.* There is nothing objectionable in this interpretation; and when Saint Athanasius employed it against Arius, the latter knew not how to answer.

(9) Before the creation of the world, *the Word was with God*, where he possessed the glory which belongeth to the only Son of the Father. He asks that his humanity may be associated in this glory, and that the uncreated Word may be recognized in the splendor of the Word incarnate.



O my Father, if it be possible, let this Chalice pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

D.S.J. Sculpsit

pray not for the world (10), but for them whom thou hadst given me, because they are thine." He said this, speaking as man; but he speaks as God when he adds: "All my things are thine, and thine are mine: I am glorified in them (11)."

Let us not be surprised at seeing him urge so many motives in order to induce his Father to love them and to take them under his protection; they are about to be deprived of his presence, and of the sensible support which they had found therein. "Now I," said he, "am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name (12), whom thou hast given me, that they may be one (13) as we also are. While I was with them, I kept them in thy name. Those whom thou gavest me have I kept; and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition (14), that the Scripture may be fulfilled (15). And now I come to thee,

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(10) Jesus Christ does not here pray for the incredulous and perverse world, but for his disciples who had faith and justice. Thus it is that he asks for them what it is suitable to ask for just and faithful men, viz., perseverance in faith and justice, and the consummation of charity. Upon the cross he shall ask for the wicked and for the impious what should first be asked for this class of men, viz., the pardon of their sins, the first effect of which is the justification of sinners.

(11) The glory which he had hitherto derived from them was so inconsiderable, one would almost venture to say that it was scarcely worth speaking of. In the same way he has just been praising them for having believed in his word, although their faith was so unsettled, and for having practised the duties which he inculcated, although their virtue was so imperfect that he had been obliged often to reproach them with the weakness of both their faith and their virtue. This conduct is just like that of a tender and enlightened mother who points out their faults to her children, in order that they may correct them, and entertains their father with an account of those praiseworthy and virtuous qualities which may make him love them.

(12) That is to say, for the glory of thy name. P. De Ligny translates into French, *à cause de votre nom*, because of thy name. The note states that others translate, *par la vertu de votre nom*, or by virtue of thy name; and that we may choose between both meanings.

(13) In order that they may be one and the same thing by union of heart, as we are one and the same thing by unity of nature.

If they have charity, they shall have all the virtues; and if they shall remain perfectly united, they are assured of all success. And, indeed, Jesus Christ seems to sum up in charity all that he asks for them from his Father.

(14) An individual may have been given by the Father to Jesus Christ, and nevertheless be lost.

(15) It was necessary that he should be lost, since his loss was foretold in Scripture;

and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy filled in themselves (16). I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them (17), because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world. I do not ask that thou take them away out of the world, but that thou preserve them from evil (18). They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth (19). As thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world (20). For them I do sanctify myself (21), that they also may be sanctified in truth.

"And not for them only do I pray, but for those also who, through their word, shall believe in me; that they also may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us (22),

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but his loss had been foretold only because he was to perish by the free and voluntary determination of his own heart.

(16) The joy which I shall have at seeing them preserved and sanctified; or otherwise that joy which they shall feel when they first experience, in my absence, the same effects from your protection as when I was present with them. We may choose between these two explanations.

(17) A further reason why God should love them; as the enemy of God and of Jesus Christ hates them.

(18) God does much for virtuous people, whom he delivers by death from the dangers and persecutions of the world. He does more for them whom he leaves therein with grace to surmount those difficulties: the first class constitute the just, the second are the heroes of religion.

(19) This word is the evangelical law; Jesus Christ asks that his disciples may perfectly accomplish it: it alone produces true and perfect sanctity.

(20) Jesus Christ is the ambassador of God, the apostles were the ambassadors of Jesus Christ; the latter, in the name of God and of Jesus Christ, have sent their disciples, who, in their turn, have sent others. The persons employed are different, but the source of the mission is always the same, and the last bishop who shall be consecrated in the Catholic Church shall have his mission from God as truly as Jesus Christ had his.

The apostles sent into the world should be saints: first, in order to preserve themselves from the corruption of the world; second, in order to sanctify the world by their example, without which preaching seldom produces a salutary effect. Each of them should be enabled to say: *Be ye imitators of me, as I am of Jesus Christ.*

(21) The sanctity of Jesus Christ is the source and the model of ours. Although as God he was essentially holy, and although he was necessarily so as man personally united to the Word, he still might not sanctify himself in the rigorous sense of this term, which signifies to render one's self holy, but to produce acts of sanctity in the sight of men who were to be sanctified by his merits and example.

(22) By means of Jesus Christ, who is *one* with God, and who has made himself *one* with us, there is formed of God, of Jesus Christ, and of us so intimate a union,



THE MOUNT OF OLIVES AND N.E. VIEW OF JERUSALEM

that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them (23), that they may be one, as we also are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me (24). Father, I will, that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me, that they may see my glory, which thou hast given me; because thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world. Just Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have made known thy name to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them (25)."

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that the term union scarcely suffices to express it, so that the term "*Unity*" seems to be more properly applicable. The mystery shall be unveiled in Heaven; the union of the faithful is its image upon earth. Although the eye doth not perceive either God, who is the soul and centre of it, or Jesus Christ, who is the connecting link, yet both one and the other manifest themselves by the effects in which we recognize the author of the law of charity, as we recognize the Creator by the works of creation. It is on this account that the Saviour adds, *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* The world, in point of fact, has recognized him by this mark, and many an infidel who had withstood the proof of miracles, could no longer resist that of charity.

(23) By this glory some understand the divine filiation, others the apostolical mission, and others still the participation of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Some think that the Saviour here means the gift by anticipation of eternal glory. We may as well observe in this place that we have omitted to explain several expressions in the Saviour's prayer, which are taken in different senses by the Fathers and Catholic interpreters. All these senses are good; none of them is so manifestly the literal sense as to exclude the other. To report them all would be merely multiplying commentaries, and then it is scarcely possible but that some one of these commentaries should present itself to those who read with attention this admirable prayer, and it is natural that each individual should be more affected by what occurs to his own mind, than by what might otherwise be suggested to him.

(24) God loves us with the same love with which he has loved Jesus Christ. It is properly Jesus Christ whom he loves in us, and the love which he has for us is only an extension of that which he has for Jesus Christ.

(25) This love *is in them,* because the love of the Father is no other than the Holy Ghost who is really given to those whom God loves, with that special love by which they are made his children. It is this which made Saint Paul say: *The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us* (Rom. v.).

CHAPTER LXIII.

GARDEN OF OLIVES.—KISS OF JUDAS.—SOLDIERS STRUCK DOWN.—MALCHUS.—JESUS IS APPREHENDED AND CONDUCTED TO ANNAS AND CAIPHAS.—THE BLOW.—FALSE WITNESSES.—CONFESSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

(*a*) "When Jesus had said these things," having nothing more to do in this world but to suffer and to die, "he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron. He went, according to his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. Then Jesus came with them into a country place which is called Gethsemani, where there was a garden, into which he entered with his disciples. And Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place; because Jesus had often resorted thither together with his disciples." Very far from avoiding the traitor, he advanced to meet him; and as the moment of the combat drew nigh, (*b*) "He said to his disciples: Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray; pray [*ye also*], lest ye enter into temptation. And [*leaving the others behind*] he taketh Peter, and James, and John with him, and he began to grow sorrowful (1), and to be sad. And he saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (2); stay you here, and watch with me. And going a little

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 1, 2; St. Luke, xxii. 39: St. Matthew, xxvi. 36.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 36–38, 39; St. Luke, xxii. 40–44; St. Mark, xiv. 33, 34–36.

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(1) He began to feel sorrow and also fear. He might experience both these sentiments, because he was man; but because he was the Man-God, he felt them only at the moment and in the degree that he wished, and these feelings ceased when he commanded them to depart from him. If this be weakness, we may term it the weakness of a God; and the power of mastering his passions when at this height, evinced greater strength than if he were utterly devoid of passions.

This is properly *the passion* of the Saviour's soul. Man had sinned in his body and in his soul. Fear and sorrow are not sins; these two feelings are no imperfections in him who was *one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin* (Heb. iv. 15).

Neither is it beneath the Man-God to feel the bitterness of sorrow, any more than it was to endure pain when scourged and crucified, since in reality both one and the other is grief, and it is still the soul which feels.

(2) My soul is sorrowful, and it will be so until the moment of my death; or else my

further, he was withdrawn away from them a stone's cast; and kneeling down, he prayed, saying: Father, if thou wilt, remove this chal ice from me. But yet not my will, but thine be done. And being in agony, he prayed the longer; and he saith: (*a*) Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove the chalice from me, but not what I will, but what thou wilt (3). And his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground (4)."

(*a*) St. Mark, xiv. 36.

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sorrow is like to that which is felt at the moment of death; or else again, I am so sorrowful as to be almost dying with sorrow. The last of these three explanations is the most natural and most generally followed.

It is very difficult to reconcile this sorrow with the intuitive vision of God. Was he sorrowful without any mixture of joy, or did he experience the two opposite extremes of joy and sorrow? Some interpreters advance the first proposition; others, the second; neither appears impossible. God, by his omnipotence, might have separated the effect from the cause—that is to say, that whilst preserving the intuitive vision in the Saviour's soul, he might hinder this vision from producing the joy which is the natural effect thereof. On the other hand, we know by experience that two different causes may produce at the same time, in the same person, great sorrow and great joy; and it is in this way that we commonly conceive the state to which Jesus Christ was reduced during his agony.

(3) Provided we have that entire resignation to the will of God, we may be sensible of our woes, lament them, ask God to deliver us from them, and, in the heavy affliction of nature, seek for solace in the company of virtuous friends. All that is not incompatible with patience, nor even with the most perfect patience, since Jesus Christ has done it.

There is a mode of suffering which is apparently more courageous. Jesus Christ has chosen this in preference to it, because this is more humiliating, and he wished to lower himself—more painful, and he wished to suffer—more proportioned to our weakness, and he wished to instruct us. We may exhort each other to suffer in this way, and in doing so we do not exhort our friends to suffer with joy, because joy in suffering is a miracle which God operates or does not operate, according to his good pleasure. We may desire to possess this joy in suffering, supposing that it should please God to produce it in us; and we must know how to do without it, if God withholds it from us.

He sometimes produces this joy in the saints, in order to make patience more easy to them, and sometimes he does not produce it, in order that he may leave them the whole merit of patience. Saint Paul said (II. Cor. vii.), *I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulation.* He had said previously, speaking of what he had to suffer in Asia: *We would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our tribulation, which came to us in Asia; we were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we were weary even of life* (II. Cor. i.).

(4) Sweat is an effect of fear; this is not the only example which we know of fear being so great as to be followed by a sweat of blood. We could not, therefore, decide whether this sweat was or was not miraculous, unless we reckoned it a miracle of charity in the Man-God to have reduced himself for us to such a terrible extremity.

Then, as if the support of the divinity had been utterly withdrawn from the humanity, (*a*) "There appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him (5). And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow (6). He said to Peter: Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour with me? Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak (7). Going away again, he prayed, saying the same words: My Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, thy will be done; and when he returned, he found them again asleep; for their eyes were heavy, and they knew not what to answer him. Leaving them, he went again, and he prayed the third time, saying the self same word. Then he cometh to his disciples, and saith to them: Sleep ye now, and take your rest. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go; behold, he is at hand that will betray me."

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 43–45; St. Mark, xiv. 37–39, 40; St. Matthew, xxvi. 40–42, 44–46.

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(5) We are not informed what species of comfort he received from the angel. We may conclude that this celestial messenger strengthened his body, by restoring to him the vigor which the agony and the sweat of blood had caused him to lose. Apparently he also strengthened his mind, by representing to him the principal motives which should induce him to suffer, such as the restoration of his Father's glory, and the redemption and salvation of men. The visit of the angel is also one of the circumstances from which we infer that the human nature in Jesus Christ was then abandoned to all its sensibility.

(6) If the conduct of Jesus Christ teaches us that it is not forbidden to those who suffer to seek human consolation, that of the apostles shows plainly the little reliance we should place upon them.

When men fail to console us, let us return, like Jesus Christ, to God, who permits men to fail in affording us consolation, only in order to recall us more effectually to himself, as the sole refuge and the only consolation of the afflicted.

(7) Those who deem themselves secure of victory because they are determined, as the apostles were, to fight courageously, appear to be ignorant of two truths, one of which results from experience, and the other is a matter of faith. The first is, that there is a wide difference between the will and the deed, and that the most courageous resolutions when the enemy is out of sight, disappear at his approach. Such is the meaning here conveyed by the weakness of the flesh opposed to the willingness of the spirit. The second truth, which is a matter of faith, is, that if the good-will comes from grace, the execution should also proceed from the same source, pursuant to this expression of Saint Paul: *It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish* (Philip. ii.). We must, therefore, pray, in order that we may obtain the second grace, without which the first remains inactive.

(*a*) "As he spoke, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them: having received a band of soldiers, and servants from the chief priests and the Pharisees, [*he*] cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons, and staves. And he that betrayed him had given them a sign, saying: Whosoever I shall kiss (8), that is he; lay hold of him, and lead him away carefully. When he was come, immediately going up to Jesus, he saith: Hail, Rabbi, and he kissed him."

The Lamb of God did not refuse this kiss, which was more cruel than all the insults endured by him in his passion: instead of treating the wretch as his perfidy deserved, he was more affected by the loss of Judas than by his crime; and seeking rather to save than to confound him, (*b*) "Jesus said to him: Friend, whereto art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?"

These sweet words would have softened a tiger, and converted any ordinary villain; but a perverted apostle could not be otherwise than the most wicked and the most hardened of all sinners. This man, instead of casting himself at the feet of so good a master, returned to his gang, and perhaps it was at this moment that he received payment for his treachery.

They could no longer refuse it to him, since he had fully performed his promise. However, the Saviour was not yet taken; it was not fitting that he should be captured by surprise, and he was only to be so arrested, because he wished it. (*c*) "Therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, he went forth and said to them: Whom seek ye? They answered him: Jesus of Nazareth.

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi, 47; St. Luke, xxii. 47; St. John, xviii. 3; St. Mark, xiv. 43–45.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 50; St. Luke, xxii. 48.

(*c*) St. John, xviii. 4.

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(8) He had appointed this signal in order that Jesus Christ might not perceive that it was meant as such. It was a custom amongst the Jews to kiss each other when they met; to fail in doing so was a mark of indifference, and perhaps of contempt. We have seen the reproach which Jesus Christ made to Simon the Pharisee for having given him no kiss (St. Luke, vii.).

The primitive Christians still observed this custom, as we learn from the Epistles of the apostolic writers; amongst us it is only observed by women. This custom is praiseworthy, so long as it is confined to persons of the same sex; otherwise it is an abuse, the indecency of which can never be justified by custom.

Jesus saith to them: I am he. As soon, therefore, as he had said to them: I am he; they went backward, and fell to the ground." He who had cast them down, permitted them to arise immediately. "Again, therefore, he asked them: Whom seek ye? and they said: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered: I have told you that I am he. If, therefore, you seek me, let these go their way," he added, pointing to his disciples, "that the word might be fulfilled which he said: Of them whom thou hast given me I have not lost any one (9)."

All that Jesus had determined to do previous to his apprehension was now accomplished. He had made his enemies feel, by a single word, that, alone and unarmed, he was stronger than a troop of armed men. He had permitted them to do to his person what they never could have done without his permission, and by forbidding them to touch those who had been given to him, he had showed the bounds which his Almighty hand had marked out for their fury. (*a*) "Then they came up, and held him (10)."

"They that were about him, seeing what would follow, said to him: Lord, shall we strike with the sword? Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it," without waiting for the answer, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. The name

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 50, 52, 54; St. Luke, xxii. 49–51; St. John, xviii. 10, 11.

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(9) This expression, which has been read, page 491, Part II., is understood with reference to eternal life; the application which Saint John here makes of it informs us that the Saviour wished also to insinuate that none of his disciples should lose their life during his passion. The prophecy was accomplished in two ways, and what is remarkable—the exception of Judas took place in two senses—he alone lost the life of the soul and the life of the body. What is guarded by God is, they say, well guarded. The combined fury of Jews and Romans could not make the disciples lose a hair from their heads, and he who had ranged himself on the side which appeared the strongest perished miserably.

God allows the wicked to prevail to a certain point; but he strikes in his turn, and his blows are so terrible that they make the stricken oppressor an object of compassion even to the victims of his oppression.

(10) It is surprising that the miracle which had thrown them prostrate on the ground did not make them enter into themselves. Miracles do not convert people who are governed by passion; they only serve to render them more furious: so much for the masters. As to the servants, some of them do not think at all; others only consider the interest which they have in gratifying the passions of those who employ them.

of the servant was Malchus. But Jesus said: Suffer ye thus far (11); and when he had touched his ear he healed him (12). He [*then*] said to Peter: Put up thy sword into thy scabbard; for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword (13). The chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels (14)? How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that so it must be done?"

If the two miracles which Jesus Christ had just performed were not sufficient to disarm the hatred which pursued him, they served at least as proof that it lay with himself alone either to encounter the effects thereof, or to guard himself against them. But, in order thoroughly to convince his enemies, he wished to make them understand that if they then succeeded in rendering themselves masters of his person, it was solely because he wished it. For, so long as he wished to avoid them, they had never been able to succeed, although he was in the midst of them, and we may say in their very hands.

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(11) (P. De Ligny translates into French thus: *tenez vous en là*, which signifies, "*remain where you are.*" He appends the following note): We have adopted the common explanation. The Latin words, *Sinite usque huc*, appear to signify more naturally, *laissez venir jusq'ici*, let him (or them) come hither, whether the Saviour alludes to those who came to arrest him, or whether he speaks of Malchus, whom he wished to approach him, in order that he might cure him by his touch. What makes this latter interpretation highly probable are these words which follow immediately in Saint Luke: *And when he had touched his ear he healed him.*

(12) A miracle of clemency succeeds one of terror. If they are neither frightened by one nor affected by the other, will not the Lord have a right to say to them: *What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard that I have not done to it?*—(Isaias, v.)

(13) Shall perish, that is to say, shall deserve to perish. Jesus quotes the law, and alludes apparently to that saying from Genesis, c. x.: *Whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed.*

(14) He had not obtained the request that the chalice of his passion should pass away from him: how could he obtain the twelve legions of angels in order to secure himself against it? Our reply is as follows: Jesus freely consented to redeem mankind. The Eternal Father commanded him, in consequence, to suffer death upon the cross—the only price which he would receive for our ransom. Jesus persisting in the wish to save men, could not, therefore, be exempted from drinking the chalice, and this is the reason why he did not obtain his request in the Garden of Olives. But he could have revoked this consent; and if he had done so, his Father would immediately have armed in his defence the entire host of heaven.

Therefore (*a*) "he said to the chief priests, and magistrates of the temple, and the ancients, that were come unto him: Are you come out as it were against a thief, with swords and staves to apprehend me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not lay hands on me; but this is your hour (15), and the power of darkness (16). Now all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled: then the disciples all leaving him, fled. A certain young man followed him, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and they laid hold on him; but he, casting off the linen cloth, fled from them naked."

(*b*) "Then the band, and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews took Jesus and bound him. They led him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiphas, who was the high priest of that year. Now, Caiphas was he who had given the counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people (17). Annas," satisfied with this mark of his son-in-law's respect, "sent him bound to Caiphas the high priest (18). They led him to Caiphas the high priest, where the Scribes and the ancients were assembled."

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 52, 53; St. Mark, xiv. 48, 49, 51, 52; St. Matt. xxvi. 56.

(*b*) St. John, xviii. 12–14–24; St. Matthew, xxvi. 57.

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(15) The world has its hour, and God his eternity.

(16) It is worthy of remark that, on an occasion when it was difficult to retain self-possession, Jesus displays neither passion nor weakness. He speaks to all, to Judas, to Peter, to the priests, and to their satellites, and he says to each what is suitable for them; he instructs and gives orders until the moment when he says to his enemies words equivalent to these: Take me now; I restrain you no farther. What strength there is in this moderation!

(17) The seizing of this young man gives reason for thinking that they had the design of arresting the Saviour's disciples, if he had left it in their power.

(18) These words, *Annas sent him bound to Caiphas,* are found in Saint John, immediately after he has related the first denial of Saint Peter, and the blow given to the Saviour by one of the high priest's servants; which has made some interpreters think, and amongst them even Saint Augustine, that both the blow and this first denial occurred at the house of Annas. However, as the three denials are placed by the other evangelists in the house of Caiphas, it has been a matter of inquiry how to reconcile them with Saint John; and the way to reconcile both statements has been obtained by observing that the two events which we speak of are placed by Saint John in the house of him whom he calls simply the *high priest,* after having been satisfied in saying of Annas that he was son-in-law of the high priest. Now, to term a man *high priest* immediately after having spoken of one as the *high priest's father-in-law,* is evidently speaking of the son-

(*a*) "And Simon Peter," ashamed of his flight, and recovered a little from his fear, "followed Jesus afar off, and so did another disciple. That disciple was known to the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the court of the high priest (19). But Peter stood at the

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 15, 16, 18; St. Mark, xiv. 54; St. Luke, xxii. 55; St. Matthew, xxvi. 58.

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in-law, after having spoken of the father-in-law. Saint John, therefore, places these events in the house of Caiphas; and if he says subsequently that Annas sent Jesus to Caiphas, he does so in order to show that Jesus had been sent to the latter, after having been conducted to Annas.

It was necessary that he should say this; and if he had previously said so, there would have been no difficulty in the matter; but the difficulty is obviated by his having subsequently stated it.

In order to anticipate a difficulty which might be started, we shall remark that, from the time that the Romans had rendered the Pontificate annual, the names of pontiffs and high priests were still given to those who had held the office during the preceding years. But the title was given to them only when they were spoken of collectively, as of an order of men rendered superior to common priests by the Pontificate with which they had been invested. For when a person said simply the high priest or the pontiff, he understood him only who actually held office.

(19) It is generally agreed that this disciple was Saint John; however, there is some ground for doubting it. We know who Saint John was before he attached himself to the Saviour—a young man of Galilee, the son of a poor fisherman, who, perhaps, had never left his own country until the time when he quitted his boat and his nets in order to follow Jesus Christ. When and how could he have formed an acquaintance with the high priest, who was the first man of the nation, whilst he was a young man from the very lowest class—a Galilean, despised on this account by the Jews properly speaking—who had become odious to the whole sacerdotal order by his avowed attachment to Jesus Christ, and had passed only a few days of his life in Jerusalem, during which he had not quitted his Master's side? How could he have obtained sufficient consideration from the domestics of the house to induce them to admit, through his recommendation, an unknown individual, at a time when every circumstance tended to excite distrust, and when it appeared, by Peter's exclusion, that distrust was really entertained? Is it not more natural to think that this was a concealed disciple, and on this account unsuspected—a man of condition, such as were Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, who might have been known to and respected by the high priest? It is true that Saint John happened to be present at the crucifixion; but does it follow that he had accompanied Jesus from the time that he left the Garden of Olives? It is also true that it is written that Peter followed from a distance, and with him another disciple; which leads to the inference that this other disciple had started with Peter from the Garden of Olives, and, consequently, that he was one of the apostles, and, moreover, that he was probably Saint John. But is it still impossible that some disciple who might not have been one of the apostles, may have joined Peter in the streets of Jerusalem, where the tumultuous progress of so many people might have caused him to inquire what was going forward, and

door without. The other disciple, therefore, who was known to the high priest, went out, and spoke to the portress, and brought in Peter even into the court of the high priest. Now, the servants and ministers stood at a fire of coals (because it was cold), and warmed themselves, when they had kindled the fire in the midst of the hall. Going in, Peter sat with the servants, that he might see the end, and warmed himself [*at the fire*] with them."

In the mean time, Jesus had entered into the hall, where all his enemies were assembled to sit in judgment upon him. It was sworn that he should die; but no action of his life gave cause for a just condemnation. (*a*) "The high priest, therefore, asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him: I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in the synagogue, and in the temple whither all the Jews resort, and in secret I have spoken nothing (20). Why askest thou me? ask them who have heard what I have spoken unto them. Behold, they know what things I have said," added he, pointing out (as there is reason to believe) those amongst the assembly who, having several times heard him, were in a position to give evidence concerning his doctrine.

This answer was worthy of the Eternal Wisdom from whose lips it came. An accused party is inadmissible as evidence in his own favor; and if the crime of which he is accused be public, it is easy to prove it by witnesses. To decline this natural course was showing too plainly that they were bent upon his destruction, and Jesus owed it to truth and to his innocence to make this apparent. It is true that he could not effect this without making his judges feel that they were in the wrong; and as no one can ever be in the right with impunity when arraigned before prejudiced judges, "when he had said these things, one of the servants standing by gave Jesus a

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 19–23.

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to be informed thereof by Peter? It is, therefore, at least doubtful whether or not this disciple was Saint John.

(20) Jesus Christ often taught his disciples in private. Nevertheless, he could say with truth that he taught nothing *in secret*, because the doctrine which he taught in private was the same as that which he taught in public: we are to understand that it was substantially the same, and that he did but expound it further in the familiar discourses which he had with his apostles.

blow (21), saying: Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him: If I have spoken evil (22), give testimony of the evil (23); but if well, why strikest thou me?"

The judges approved, at least by their silence, of this most brutal act. Nevertheless, what the Saviour had said was so reasonable, that they deemed themselves bound to proceed against him in the manner which he himself had just proposed. Accordingly, (*a*) "the chief priests and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put him to death, and they found not" any who had even the semblance of truth, "whereas many false witnesses had come in; (*b*) for many bore false witness against him"—manifestly false, "and their evidence were not agreeing. Last of all there came two false witnesses, and they said: We heard him say: I am able to destroy the temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it. I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another not made with hands (24). And their witness did not

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 59, 60.
(*b*) St. Mark, xiv. 56–58–61; St. Matthew, xxvi. 60, 61.

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(21) We are ignorant whether this man is or is not saved; but we know that he may have been saved, that is to say, we know that it is not impossible that he may enjoy ineffable and eternal delight in the contemplation of that adorable face which he so grossly outraged. Oh! abyss of mercy, more profound and more impenetrable than all those of justice.

(22) There are circumstances wherein reason, justice, and sometimes even charity, forbid you to present the left cheek to him who has struck you on the right. Jesus Christ now found himself placed in just such a position. But circumstances shall soon change; and a thousand blows which he shall receive without averting his face, and without uttering a single word, shall make it manifest that he has taught nothing which he has not practiced.

(23) Amongst the various reasons which the Saviour might have had for replying to the individual who had struck him, that which first presents itself is, that he did not wish to let it be thought that he was deficient in respect towards the legitimate authorities, even when they are persecuting and unjust.

We may give as a second reason that Jesus, who availed himself of every opportunity of giving instruction, wishes to inform this man, who was a sort of beadle, that he should not abuse the right which the laws or common custom gave him to strike those who, whilst answering the magistrates, deviated from the respect due to them.

(24) Jesus Christ had said (St. John, ii. 19): *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* These words, *I am able to destroy,* and *I will destroy,* placed instead of this word, *destroy,* were what chiefly rendered these men false witnesses. When

agree. And the high priest rising up in the midst, asked Jesus, saying: Answerest thou nothing to the things that are laid to thy charge by these men? But Jesus," sufficiently justified by the mutual contradictions of his accusers, "held his peace, and answered nothing."

He must speak, notwithstanding, because he must perish, and they could no longer find a pretext for his condemnation except in his own words; (*a*) "Again [*therefore*] the high priest asked him, and said to him: I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ the Son of the blessed God."

Jesus might still remain silent, or get rid of a question so embarrassing by giving one of those answers with which he had so often confounded the malice of his enemies; but he wished on this occasion to confess the truth of which he was to be the first martyr, and the confession of which was to make so many martyrs after him. Thus, although fully aware that it would cost him his life: "Thou hast said it," he saith to him who summoned him to declare whether he was the Christ: Yes, "I am." Then, addressing himself to all those who were present, he adds: "Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven (25)."

(*b*) "Then the high priest," concealing his joy under the appear-

(*a*) St. Mark, xiv. 61, 62; St. Matthew, xxvi. 63, 64.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 65, 66.

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a person wishes to accuse and to condemn any one on account of his words, if he do not report these words precisely as they came from the mouth or the pen of the accused, the accuser is a false witness and an unjust judge.

(25) There is a profound meaning in these latter words. Jesus Christ does not utter them solely for the purpose of intimidating his judges, by warning them that he shall in his turn be their judge; he informs them further, that every thing which has been foretold with reference to his glorious coming shall have its fulfilment, and this took away all pretext for their incredulity; for the matter stands as if he said to them: You think yourselves authorized not to acknowledge me, because I have not as yet one of the principal characters appertaining to the Messiah foretold by the prophets; but wait a little—this mark shall appear as well as the others; and in the mean time recognize me in the humiliating state to which you see me reduced, since it is not less foretold than that state of glory and of power which the Scripture truly announces, but the time for it has not yet arrived. This supposes that Jesus Christ had proved elsewhere that he was the true Messiah, and of this his miracles were more than sufficient proof.

ance of a hypocritical sorrow, "rent his garments (26), saying: He hath blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy; what think you? They all answering, said: He is guilty of death (27)."

CHAPTER LXIV.

INSULTS AND OUTRAGES.—DENIAL OF SAINT PETER, AND HIS TEARS.—JESUS INTERROGATED A SECOND TIME BY THE PRIESTS.—REPENTANCE OF JUDAS, AND HIS DESPAIR.

After this first examination they withdrew, postponing till the following morning the conclusion of this affair—the successful issue of which appeared no longer doubtful. Jesus was left in the custody of the servants and domestics. These satellites would have thought that they served their masters badly if they contented themselves with guarding him. They believed that it was part of their duty to outrage him. (*a*) "Some began to spit on him. The men that held him mocked him and struck him. They blindfolded him (1), and smote his face, saying: Prophesy unto us, O Christ,

(*a*) St. Mark, xiv. 65; St. Luke, xxii. 63–65; St. Matthew, xxvi. 68.

(26) This was a wretch who acted the religious man; but his action serves to show us that the Jews, when they heard blasphemy, rent their garments, whilst we see Christians hear without emotion the blasphemies of the impious. We shall not say that they applaud, for could those who applaud such language be still called Christians?

(27) In a numerous assembly of judges, the most iniquitous of all judgments was unanimous. After that, there is no iniquity that need cause surprise.

Were all these judges, then, equally wicked? No; amongst the wicked there were some weak, and the weak were hurried away by the wicked. The latter were, without doubt, the most culpable, which does not prevent sentence of death from being pronounced against the others, by these words of Saint Paul (Rom. i. 32): *They who do such things are worthy of death; and not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them that do them.*

(1) This insolence is imitated as closely as possible by those who, in order to offend God with hardihood, persuade themselves that he does not see them, and who say, at least in their heart, these words which the prophet places in their mouth: *The Lord shall not see; neither shall the God of Jacob understand* (Psalm xciii. 7).

who is he that struck thee: and blaspheming, many other things they said against him."

This scene occupied the rest of the night, and during all that time he whom the angels adore served as a butt for the ridicule of this low rabble. We do not read in the history of our Saviour's passion that he opposed one single word to so many outrages, because, in point of fact, he did not utter one. If the evangelists do not always directly say so, the prophets assure us of it; and this miracle of patience is contradicted by no one. But what renders the fact still more wonderful, and what we shall here remark with reference to all the Saviour endured during the whole course of his passion is, that he suffered nothing which was not felt on his part as exquisitely as it could be felt. We speak not only of his corporal pains to which the perfect constitution of his body rendered him so sensitive. All that is most humiliating in contempt, most insulting in derision, most contumelious in injury—all the most revolting details of the outrages which he endured, penetrated to the innermost depths of his soul. He tasted this accumulation of bitterness, and filled himself with it even unto satiety, according to what is written that he should be saturated with opprobrium. We may judge, therefore, what he had to suffer during that fearful night—the mere remembrance of which produces in pious souls such lively compassion, and calls forth such an abundance of tears. But what gave the finishing stroke to his sorrow, and what was to him the most painful of all outrages, is, that while he was thus in the power of his cruel enemies, the first and the most favored of his disciples, the chief of his apostles, chose to renounce him.

We have seen that Peter, after having entered through the interference of one of the disciples, (*a*) "sat without in the court below, warming himself. There cometh one of the maid-servants of the high priest, and when she had seen Peter warming himself, looking on him, she saith: Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth; but he denied before them all (2), saying: Woman, I know him

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvi. 69–72; St. Mark, xiv. 66–68; St. John, xviii. 25; St. Luke, xxii. 57, 58.

(2) The weakest being in nature, and the least imposing in worldly estimation—a fe-

not (3); I neither know nor understand what thou sayest. And," wishing to avoid a second interrogation, "he went forth before the court, and the cock crew. As he went out of the gate, another maid saw him, and she saith to them that were there: This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth; and after a little while another, seeing him, said: Thou also art one of them. They said, therefore, to him: Art not thou also one of his disciples?"

The fear of Peter increased with his danger, and his crime with his fear. His first denial was but a lie; to the second he added perjury. "Again he denied with an oath [*saying*]: I am not: I know not the man."

It appears that they believed him, inasmuch as they did not insist, and he should have availed himself of this opportunity in order to withdraw unperceived. The very fear which had made him renounce his Master was an urgent motive for him to quit a place where he might be recognized at any moment for one of his chief disciples. But Peter still loved him whom he renounced: he loved him, I say, less than his life; and in this did his crime consist; but still he loved him too well to make up his mind to go away from him, in the uncertainty in which he was as to what might be his fate. Therefore, as he thought that he had dissipated all suspicion, he flattered himself that he might remain with impunity, and he may have entertained this notion for a short time, while they appeared to forget him. But (*a*) "after the space as it were of one hour, one of the servants of the high priest, a kinsman to him whose

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 59–61; St. John, xviii. 26, 27; St. Matthew, xxvi. 73–75; St. Mark, xiv. 70–72.

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male-slave—succeeds in overthrowing an apostle, nay, the chief of the apostles, and he who of all others had hitherto evinced the greatest courage.

Her condition would have been of no consequence, and beauty alone would have been all-powerful—if the object were to seduce him by her attractions; but it is by fear alone that she overpowers him—and one word suffices. Nothing is weaker than the presumptuous man.

When Peter subsequently undertook to plant the cross upon the Capitol, and to bring idolatrous Rome to adore, instead of its gods, a Jew crucified by the Romans, he never could be tempted to believe that his courage could have inspired him with such a project, or that he could surmount all obstacles by his own strength.

(3) He did not internally disown him, but he renounced him externally. This it was which constituted his crime.

ear Peter cut off, saith to him: Did I not see thee in the garden with him? Another certain man affirmed, saying: Of a truth this man was also with him, for he is also a Galilean." The matter being thus debated, "they came that stood by, and said to Peter: Surely thou also art one of them, for thou art also a Galilean; thy speech doth discover thee. Again, therefore, for the third time, Peter denied. He began to curse (4) and to swear, saying: I know not the man of whom you speak. Immediately, as he was yet speaking, the cock crew again [*for the second time*], and the Lord turning, looked on Peter (5). Peter remembered the word that Jesus said unto him: Before the cock crow twice thou shalt thrice deny me; and going forth, he wept bitterly."

We know not how it was that the Saviour happened to be in the court, where he cast upon his apostle this saving glance. But as we know nothing positive as to the place where the servant of the high priest inflicted upon him the outrages which we have related, it may possibly have been the case that, in order to diversify their entertainment, they might have led Jesus into this court at the very moment when Peter denied him for the third time. For, although it has been said that this glance of Jesus was purely spiritual, the most common opinion is, that Jesus looked upon Peter with the eyes of the body, and this meaning is that which the text naturally presents to the mind.

Whilst Peter bewailed his sin, the servants went on with their sacrilegious sport, which continued all the rest of the night. (*a*) "As soon as it was day, all the ancients of the people and the chief priests and Scribes came together, and took counsel against Jesus, that they might put him to death." His confession of the preceding evening sufficed them for that purpose. Apparently they considered it ne-

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 66–72.

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(4) It is not stated whether Peter made these imprecations against himself or against Jesus Christ. As we are in ignorance with reference to this matter, we would do best to believe that he directed them against himself, and that he apparently made use of some fashion of speech similar to these: May I be crushed with thunder, or, may the earth swallow me up, if I know him.

(5) It was this look, and the grace wherewith it was accompanied, which wrought the conversion of Peter.

cessary that he should repeat it, in order to establish the guilt and the obstinacy of the pretended criminal. They well knew, moreover, that they had no need to fear lest the Saviour should embarrass them by retracting. Besides that this was, perhaps, the very thing which they most desired, they knew him too well—we might say they esteemed him too highly in the depth of their hearts—to apprehend that he could ever retract what he had once declared. Thus, well assured of the answer, (*a*) "they brought him into their council, saying," with a false show of moderation, "If thou be the Christ, tell us. He saith to them: If I shall tell you, you will not believe me; and if I shall ask you" by what marks, according to the Scriptures, the Christ is to be recognized, "you will not answer me, nor let me go. But hereafter the Son of man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God." All present understood what was meant by this "sitting." For this reason "then said they all: Art thou, then, the Son of God (6)? Who said: You say that I am." This was the same answer which he had already given to the same question. The inference was also the same: "What need we any further testimony," they said like Caiphas, "for we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth?"

The sentence of death was already pronounced; it now only remained to carry it into execution, and in this they lost no time.

(*a*) St. Luke, xxii. 66–69.

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(6) Grave authors have thought that this examination and that of Caiphas had taken place at the same time, and on the same morning. We prefer the opinion of those who separate the occasions, and who place that of Caiphas on the evening before, putting off this until the following morning. Here are the reasons which have led us to believe this the most probable opinion; all agree as to two things: 1st. That the interrogatory which we are actually reporting took place in the morning. 2d. That it was during the night preceding that morning that the Saviour was outraged by the officers and the servants of the high priest. Now, the examination by Caiphas preceded these outrages. Two reasons prove this: 1st. After Saint Matthew has related the confession of Jesus before Caiphas, and the sentence which followed, he presently adds: *Then* (tunc) *did they spit in his face and buffet him, &c.* Now, this word *then* connects so closely what follows with what precedes, that to detach it therefrom would seem to be offering violence to the text. 2d. Who is there that does not see that these words, Prophesy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck thee? make allusion to the confession which Jesus Christ had just made, and for which they had condemned him? consequently, that the confession had preceded the mockery.

(*a*) "The whole multitude of them rising up, led Jesus bound, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor."

Then the traitor who had sold him saw the greatness of his crime, and began to feel remorse. He had flattered himself either that the enemies of Jesus would not attempt his life, or that his power would nullify their efforts: he now saw the contrary happen. The Lamb of God delivered himself up without defence to the rage of his persecutors, who, it appeared, could only be satiated by his blood. It is true that the governor, who could alone give judgment in cases of life and death, had not as yet pronounced, but the judgment of the priests might be regarded as the sure forerunner of that which he was to pass. "Seeing that he was condemned, Judas, who betrayed him," without fully anticipating the consequences of his treachery, could no longer control his grief, and "repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and ancients (7),

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 1; St. Matthew, xxvii. 2–5.

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(7) His repentance when he saw his Master condemned proves that he had retained a sort of love for him; but he loved money still more. Thus we have seen that Saint Peter, when he denied Jesus Christ, loved him still; but he loved him less than his own life. In order to be capable of committing the greatest crimes, it is not necessary to be utterly devoid of the love of God; it is sufficient that one loves any thing more than God.

Any affection, although otherwise legitimate, if it gain an ascendency in the heart over the love of God, is a criminal love.

This fatal disposition is formed, and goes on without being perceptible. *Thou hast the name of being alive, and thou art dead* (Apoc. iii.). The occasion does not give birth to it; in ordinary cases it only brings it to light. To review our attachments, to ask ourselves often what we would do if it were impossible to retain these attachments without offending God, is, perhaps, the only means of discovering this evil where it is concealed; of preventing it if it be near; of making fresh additions to the love of God, if this love is already predominant; to fortify ourselves against great temptations, which are always less to be feared when they are foreseen, and which are more easily surmounted when one has assumed the habit of forming the acts by which they are overcome. This is *preparing for war* during peace, and anticipates victory by making a trial of the combat.

If any person say that it is dangerous to make suppositions of this sort, we venture to reply that it is more dangerous not to make them. Every attack is then a surprise, and whoever is surprised is almost sure to be vanquished.

If Judas, as soon as he perceived that he loved money, had thus tested himself, it is to be presumed that he never would, from being a man interested in money matters, turn out to be a robber; from being a robber, become a traitor, and end in despair and reprobation.

saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. What is that to us?" said these cruel men (8): "look thou to it." This dry and disdainful answer gave the finishing stroke to his despair. "Casting down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and went and hanged himself with a halter." God willed it so, that so infamous a death was followed by an accident which rendered it still more ignominious. The unfortunate wretch (*a*) "being hanged, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."

He executed justice upon himself; but this cruel justice which he thus executed was the greatest of his crimes, because to despair of the mercy of the Lord is the most grievous injury which we can do him. It still remained to be considered in what way they should appropriate his money: the wicked are sometimes scrupulous observers of propriety. These men (*b*) "having taken the pieces of silver, said: It is not lawful for us to put them into the Corbona, because it is the price of blood. And after they had consulted together, they bought with them the potter's field, to be a burying place for strangers. For this cause that field was called Haceldama, that is, the field of blood, even to this day." Whence it has become the lasting proof of their crime and the monument of their incredulity; for "then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was prized, whom they prized of the children of Israel; and they gave them unto the potter's field, as the Lord appointed to me (9)."

(*a*) Acts, i. 18. (*b*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 6–10.

(8) It strikes one that they might have replied to Judas: You repent of having done a good action; the man whom you have delivered up was seditious, and a blasphemer. Why do they not speak thus? The reason is, because they themselves believe no such thing. When the wicked have conspired to effect the ruin of the just, they take care to circulate the report, "He is a wicked man, and a malefactor," but amongst each other they speak frankly: we find him, they say, an obstacle in our way; we must get rid of him.

(9) This prophecy is not found in Jeremias; but we read it in equivalent terms in *Zacharias*, chap. xi. Saint Jerome says that he read it in a Hebrew volume of Jeremias, which was shown him by a Jew. Saint Augustine had seen some copies wherein neither Jeremias nor any other prophet was found named. It might, therefore, have occurred that the name of Jeremias had been superadded by some copyist. However that may be, we have on one hand the prophecy, since it is read at least in Zacharias; on the other hand, we see its fulfilment in the Gospel. That should be sufficient for faith, and even for reason, which should only seek to know what it is really important to know.

CHAPTER LXV.

JESUS CONDUCTED BEFORE PILATE.—PILATE INTERROGATES HIM, AND SENDS HIM TO HEROD.

(*a*) "THEN they led Jesus," as we have said, "from Caiphas to the governor's hall. Their feet are swift to shed blood;" for "it was morning," and immediately after the holding of the consultation. A scruple stopped them short at the gate. The law, which forbade the murder of the innocent, did not forbid them to enter into the house of a Gentile; but these men, religious beyond what was prescribed, (*b*) "went not into the hall, that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the pasch (1). Pilate," apprised of the cause of their coming, "went out to them, and said: What accusation bring you against this man? They answered: If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him up to thee." It was hatred which spoke, and Pilate knew that very well. "He therefore said to them: Take him you, and judge him according to your law. The Jews, therefore, said to him: It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."

The Romans had deprived them of the right of so doing, and by this avowal of the fact they acknowledged that the sceptre, in whatever way it be understood, had at last passed away from the house of Juda (*c*). They should, consequently, have acknowledged that "he came who was to be sent, the expectation of nations;" but, blinded by passion, they could no longer see what their own avowal made plainer than ever. Yet as passion, which misleads on every other subject, is but too clear-sighted with regard to whatever may satisfy itself, it is surprising that they did not wish to avail themselves of

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 28; Psalm xiii. 3.

(*b*) St. John, xviii. 28–31.

(*c*) Genesis, xlix. 10.

(1) Whether it was that they were to eat the paschal lamb one day later than the Lord; or whether the partaking of the victims which were immolated on the following day, was still called eating the pasch.

the permission which Pilate gave to them to judge him whose death they so eagerly desired. Whatever hope they may have had of obtaining it from his condescension, or extorting it from his weakness, this hope was not worth the security which they could give to themselves, and which they thus renounced. Hence it has been thought that the governor spoke ironically, and that the Jews, who understood this, did not think of availing themselves of a right which was not seriously granted to them. However, it is more commonly believed that the offer was serious, but that several reasons prevented it from being accepted. The priests could only, according to the law, condemn Jesus to be stoned, and they wished him to be crucified; the hatred which they bore him could only be satiated by the most infamous and the most painful of all punishments. Moreover, they apprehended that the populace, not yet gained over, might impute to them the death of the just, and would, perhaps, proceed to some violence against those who might be the authors thereof. If the Romans should authorize it, they would serve to justify it, or at least the blame might be cast upon them; and if the people did mutiny, Pilate then, interested in supporting his own decision, had more authority and power than was necessary to quell the outbreak. Such were the motives whereon they acted, and God permitted them to be successful, because they led to the execution of his decrees and the verification of his oracles. For if Pilate, yielding to their clamors, finally determined to judge the Saviour, and to condemn him to crucifixion, it was (*a*) "that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he said, signifying what death he should die."

Obliged, however, by the first refusal of Pilate, to produce and to prove crimes, the enemies of Jesus (*b*) "began to accuse him, saying: We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he is Christ the king (2)."

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 32. (*b*) St. Luke, xxiii. 2.

(2) Only five days had elapsed since Jesus Christ, when questioned about the tribute, had publicly replied: *Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.* What impudence to accuse him of prohibiting this! It was they themselves who did not wish to pay the tribute which Jesus Christ had made it incumbent upon them to pay. It was they also who sought for a Messiah who would constitute himself a king in the sense which they accused the Saviour of desiring, and in which sense he did not desire it.

Of these three distinct charges, the first was vague, the second was false, and the third, which was true in reality, was maliciously misrepresented. For Jesus, who had rather owned than declared that he was the Christ, had not hitherto said that he was king, and his conduct gave evidence that he had never pretended to be such, in the sense which might render that pretension a state offence. This charge, however, produced the effect which they had reason to anticipate. The mere suspicion of aspiring to sovereignty, even if ill-founded, arrests the attention of the magistrate, and he must never appear to make light of it. (*a*) "Pilate, therefore," as soon as he heard the allusion to royalty, "went into the hall, and called Jesus. Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, saying: Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus answered: Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of me? Pilate answered: Am I a Jew? Thy own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee up to me: what hast thou done?"

This reply of the governor was an avowal, on his part, that he interrogated as judge, since he framed it so as to make it bear upon the accusations brought before his tribunal. The Saviour drew from him this explanation of the matter, because he wished to undergo the disgrace of a public condemnation. Thus; as soon as Pilate had declared to him in what quality he spoke, (*b*) "Jesus," always submissive to lawful authority, "answered: My kingdom is not of this world (3). If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 33–35; St. Matthew, xxvii. 11.

(*b*) St. John, xviii. 33–35; St. Luke, xxiii. 4.

The wicked impute crimes to virtuous men, as every one is aware; but it should be further noticed that the crimes which they most frequently impute are their own very crimes. We shall seldom be mistaken, by judging from their accusations, what they either do or propose to do.

(3) Jesus Christ was not king of this world, because he did not wish it. The kingdom which he reserved to himself is the Church. This kingdom is in the world, but it is not of the world; it cometh from heaven, and must return thither. Heaven is its country, and the earth is the place of its pilgrimage. Jesus Christ governs it by his doctrine, by his sacraments, and by his ministers. These means procure him subjects, but they are voluntary, and they are all the more submissive to their temporal rulers, whom Jesus Christ wishes that they should obey as they do himself.

my kingdom is not from hence. Pilate said to him: Art thou a king, then (4)? Jesus answered: Thou sayest that I am a king (5). For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith to him: What is truth (6)? and when he said this he went out again to the Jews, to the chief priests, and to the multitudes, and saith to them: I find no cause in this man."

Doth it not seem that he should rather have announced to them that he found him guilty? The Saviour had just declared that he was king, and this was the crime of which they had accused him. How could Pilate, after having elicited this avowal, proceed immediately to declare him innocent? The reason is, that, without penetrating all the mystery of his royalty, he had discovered that it was at least not of a nature to give offence to the powers of earth. In point of fact, it was not exercised by command, but by persuasion; and till then it had given disciples and not subjects to the Saviour.

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(4) Pilate comprehended two things: one that Jesus Christ was king; the other that his royalty was in no way prejudicial to the rights of sovereigns. He must needs have come to this conclusion, because, immediately after the avowal that Jesus made, Pilate declares that he finds no cause for condemnation in him. We infer that he believed him really to be king from the earnestness with which he gives him this quality. *Behold your King! shall I crucify your King, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews?* for the circumstances show that this was said seriously and without irony.

Although Pilate did not well understand in what sense the Saviour styled himself a king, we can scarcely doubt but he took it in some mystical sense relative to the religion of the Jews. Whence this expression: *Am I a Jew,* that I can speak of my chief in an affair of this nature?

But although this royalty appeared innocent to him, there is every appearance that the confession thereof which Jesus made contributed to his condemnation. *After all, he has acknowledged that he is king,* this weak judge may have said to himself, when he yielded in the end to the clamors of the Jews. The Saviour, who foresaw this, did not, therefore, suppress a truth, the avowal of which must cost him his life. We may believe that it is for this reason that Saint Paul (I. Tim. vi.) praises the generous confession which Jesus Christ made before Pontius Pilate, although he may be understood as referring to all the truths which he announced, and of which he was the martyr.

(5) This royalty of Jesus Christ is described in the second Psalm as he describes it here himself: *I am appointed king by him over Sion, his holy mountain* (the Church), *preaching his commandment.*

(6) What is this truth to which you render testimony? He was not over-anxious to know it, since he did not wait for the reply. We must not be surprised at this. Pilate was one of the great ones of the world, and he had a confused notion that this truth belonged either to morality or religion.

Pilate could not but know this. A man of public notoriety as Jesus was could not possibly have escaped the attention of the governor. We shall soon see that he was cognizant of the most secret motive which urged the Saviour's enemies to seek his ruin; and for a much stronger reason must the detail of his life and of his actions have been known to him. He had only been able to see therein what the Saviour had just given him to understand, and his answers only confirmed Pilate in the opinion which he had already formed on the subject. Besides, those who accused him of making himself king did not produce one positive fact which could serve to prove it. There was not, therefore, a single positive fact; for if there were it could not have escaped such furious and envenomed hatred; and was it not natural to decide that Jesus was irreprehensible on all the counts of accusation set forth against him? Therefore we should not be surprised that, even after so short an examination, Pilate did not hesitate to pronounce that he found nothing in him worthy of death. He was sufficiently enlightened to know what he should rely upon; and the vague reproaches to which the accusers were reduced, thoroughly convinced him how matters stood.

These accusers continued in the same tone, and, according to the custom of all calumniators, when they could prove no fact they multiplied crimes. Jesus did not oppose a single word to their accusations, (*a*) "and when he was accused in many things by the chief priests and the ancients, he answered nothing." It was not for Him to speak; it was the duty of the judge, who had only to say: It is not sufficient to accuse, you must prove; but we do not find that he said so even once. He well knew that this would be requiring from them much more than they could perform. Still, that he might not remain entirely silent in a scene wherein he ought to play the most prominent part, (*b*) "he again asked Jesus: Dost thou not hear how great testimonies they allege against thee? Answerest thou nothing? Behold in how many things they accuse thee. And he answered him to never a word, so that the governor wondered exceedingly (7)."

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 12; St. Mark, xv. 3.

(*b*) St. Mark, xv. 4; St. Matthew, xxvii. 13, 14.

(7) He could have had only compassion for a silence which proceeded from weakness

He must, indeed, have wondered, knowing as he did the wisdom of Jesus, at seeing him deliver himself up, without any defence, to all the shafts of calumny—he who had so often confounded it by a single word. Pilate knew not, indeed he was not bound to know, that Jesus had resolved to die; that, in consequence of this resolution, he could not say a single word which might serve to save his life, although he must say every thing that was absolutely necessary to the confession of the truth and the declaration of his innocence. Pilate, in point of fact, did acknowledge him to be innocent. This was sufficient to make it obligatory on Pilate to acquit Jesus, and Jesus was not bound to give him any further information. He had sufficiently enlightened his conscience. It now lay entirely with Pilate to decide justly, and if he did not, he could only blame himself. Other means would have infallibly succeeded with the Saviour. He might join issue with his accusers, and turn their accusations against themselves. He might appeal to the people, and set before their eyes the purity of his morals and the sanctity of his doctrine; move them to pity by the recital of all the benefits which he had conferred upon them; or exasperate them against his adversaries, by the contrast of their vices with his virtues. All these means, employed with that divine eloquence whereof it was said that no man had ever spoken like unto him, would have made an incalculable impression upon their minds; and who knows but this storm, excited by passion, might have burst on those who had raised it? But the work with which the Man-God was charged would not then have been accomplished; the world would not have been redeemed; and Jesus would not have given to his disciples the example of that heroic silence which endures without a murmur what God has determined that they shall suffer, (*a*) "hoping in the shadow of his wings, until iniquity pass away."

Pilate, having acknowledged the innocence of the accused, had nothing more to do than impose silence upon the accusers, and to

(*a*) Psalm lvi. 2.

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or imbecility. A silence proceeding from pride or contumacy would have excited his indignation. What surprised him, and called forth his admiration, could be, therefore, but a silence of patience and intrepidity.

dismiss them with the confusion which they deserved. This he did not do, simply because he did not dare to do so. The enemies of the Saviour, who were thoroughly conscious of this weakness, hoped that by urging him they might effect, through importunity, that which the judge's conscience did not permit him to grant them; wherefore, without producing fresh crimes, (*a*) "they were more earnest, saying: He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place (8)."

A happy chance for a man who no longer knew how to extricate himself from his embarrassment! "Pilate, hearing Galilee, asked if the man were of Galilee; and when he understood that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him away to Herod, who was also himself at Jerusalem in those days."

The murderer of Saint John the Baptist might easily become the murderer of Jesus; and he who had sacrificed a prophet to the resentment of a woman, was but too capable of immolating another to the hatred of the chief men of the nation. At first, therefore, these chief men must have been elated with joy, when they saw that the affair was referred to him; the more so as immediately after the precursor's death it had been said that Herod caused Jesus to be sought for, for the purpose of putting him to death. The Saviour had got notice of the design, and the rumor of it may have reached these men. Notwithstanding all that, the outset did not appear favorable to their views; the prince's dispositions were changed. Admiration, heightened by curiosity, had succeeded in Herod's mind to the hatred or policy which had made him seek the Saviour's life. "Seeing Jesus, he was very glad; for he was desirous of a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 5–10.

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(8) Calumny must here allow us to give it the lie direct. No, he did not go about stirring up the people into insurrection. He *went about*, saith Saint Peter (Acts, x.) *doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil.* And he who speaks thus does not speak in ignorance of the fact, since he adds: *We are witnesses of all things that he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem.* Since they wished to proceed judicially against the Saviour, they should have commenced by examining his disciples; but people are not anxious, when they wish to ruin the innocent, to call on well-informed and truth-telling witnesses.

see some sign wrought by him; and he questioned him in many words, but Jesus answered him nothing. The chief priests and the scribes" who saw that his fate lay in the hands of Herod, and that he would escape from them if he set himself to gratify the desires of that prince, "stood by earnestly accusing him." Jesus made no reply to their accusations, any more than to the questioning of Herod.

He wrought two miracles: one of wisdom, by not satisfying the frivolous curiosity of this bad prince; the other of patience, in not opposing a single word to the outrageous calumnies of his enemies; miracles which are never sought, and which are always held in little estimation by the world, and above all in the high places of the world, the courts of the great. There people may sometimes be dazzled by those peculiar exhibitions of virtue which partake of the wonderful, and startled by their lustre; but they are incapable of appreciating the true and solid qualities of virtue. "Herod," still more corrupted than the great usually are, "with his army (9) set him at nought, and mocked him." Vexation at seeing his curiosity foiled made him add derision and insult to contempt. "Putting on him a white garment, he sent him back to Pilate" in this apparel, indicative of a fool, or a visionary, or perhaps a theatrical king. It was in order to free himself from embarrassment that the governor had sent him. Herod readily believed that it was done out of deference, and in acknowledgment of his rights, which had hitherto been but little regarded. This fancy appeased his resentment: "Herod and Pilate were made friends that same day; for before they were enemies to one another."

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(9) When the prince mocked him, it was quite natural that the courtiers should mock him in like manner. We may also advance another reason, viz.: a disposition to scoff is peculiarly that of the courtier. The more grave and serious the objects are, the more is he disposed to make them subjects of laughter; and if he mocks at religion more than at any thing else, the reason is, because it is the most serious thing in the world. Yet the courtier is capable of acting a serious part, but he does so when the subjects are frivolous. These courtiers mocked at the silence of Jesus, whose gravity and dignity had produced an imposing effect upon Pilate himself; if they had had before them a charlatan who had performed in their presence some clever trick, which he had set off with the eloquence peculiar to such men, they would have regarded him with the most intense and the most serious admiration. They would have been heard to cry out: What an admirable man! May he live long, and may the prince have the glory of having preserved him to the world!

CHAPTER LXVI.

JESUS CONDUCTED AGAIN BEFORE PILATE.—BARABBAS.—PILATE'S WIFE.—FLAGELLATION.—CROWNING WITH THORNS.

MEANTIME the intention of the governor had not been carried out; the levity and heedlessness of Herod left the matter in its original state, and Pilate in the same perplexity as before. He still retained the desire, and had not yet lost the hope of rescuing the innocent from the injustice which pursued him. He had one infallible means of securing this end, viz., to exert his authority; but this he had not fortitude enough to do; and the other means, whilst they betrayed Pilate's weakness, very far from saving Jesus, served only to multiply and increase his torments. This shows that a partial protection may produce as cruel effects as downright oppression. Pilate commenced, therefore, by making a remonstrance; (*a*) "calling together the chief priests, the magistrates, and the people, he said to them: You have presented unto me this man, as one that perverted the people, and behold I having examined him before you, find no cause in this man, in those things wherein you accuse him. No, nor Herod neither, for I sent you to him; and behold, nothing is done to him" which can prove him "worthy of death. I will chastise him, therefore, and release him."

The chastisement to which he alluded was the scourge, a painful and infamous penalty, which a man of honor could not survive. The hope that the Saviour's enemies would be thereby satisfied had suggested this expedient to Pilate's mind. Such was the protection which the timid politician extended to the innocent man whom he wished to save. However, whether he perceived that this temporizing would still not satisfy these sanguinary men, or that he did not wish to make use of it until the last extremity, he hit upon another expedient, the success of which appeared to him certain, but which had no other effect than to draw down upon Jesus the grossest of all

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 13–16.

affronts, and the greatest confusion which man ever had to endure on earth.

(*a*) "Now, on the festival day he was wont to release unto them one of the prisoners, whomsoever they demanded." This custom had been added to ceremonies which the law prescribed, in order to celebrate the deliverance from the captivity of Egypt, and from the sword of the destroying angel. Although the preceding histories say nothing of it, there is every appearance that it was much more ancient than the domination of the Romans in Judea. These new masters had preserved it to the Jews by way of a privilege, and Pilate "was wont" to grant them this favor. He desired it on this occasion more than they did themselves. Here is the way in which he sought to turn it to his own account. (*b*) "He had then a notori ous prisoner that was called Barabbas." Barabbas was a robber, "who, for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison. When the multitude was come up" to the judgment hall, "they began to desire that he would do as he had ever done unto them. They, therefore, being gathered together, Pilate said: You have a custom that I should release one unto you at the pasch: whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus, that is called Christ?"

The more odious the comparison was, the more did the governor deem it suitable to his design. Jesus, placed on a par with a well-known and universally-detested criminal, ought naturally to be unanimously preferred. But what raised Pilate's hopes still higher was, that he was then treating with the people. If he had only to deal with the priests, he would not have had the same confidence, (*c*) "for he knew that for envy *they* had delivered him;" and he was not unaware that envy is capable of every thing, and blushes at nothing. But the people, who had never been opposed to Jesus—who had even declared so loudly in his favor as to keep his enemies in check—who, a few days previously, had decreed him a species of triumph—could it reasonably be expected that this very people would prefer to him a robber, an assassin still reeking with the last murder which he had committed? Encouraged by all these reasons, Pilate

(*a*) St. Mark, xv. 6.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 16, 17; St. Mark, xv. 8, 9; St. John, xviii. 39.
(*c*) St. Matt. xxvii. 18; St. Mark, xv. 10.

wished to employ further the terms most likely to gain them over; and adding to the name of Christ which he had already given to the Saviour, that of king of the Jews, a name always welcome to their ears, he said to them for the second time: (*a*) "Will you, therefore, that I release unto you the king of the Jews?"

He was still awaiting the answer, when an unforeseen message postponed it for some moments. (*b*) "As he was sitting in the place of judgment" to hear the people's request, and to pronounce the pardon of the criminal whose liberation was to be asked for, "his wife sent to him, saying: Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream, because of him (1)."

History does not inform us whether this warning made any impression on Pilate's mind, or whether he appeared at first to pay any attention to it. He may, indeed, finding himself so circumstanced, have sent word to his wife that she might be easy in her mind—that the measures which he had taken would infallibly save

(*a*) St. John, xviii. 39. (*b*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 19.

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(1) Notwithstanding the authority of some ancient interpreters, who have thought that this dream came from the devil, the common opinion is, that it came from God. There is no appearance that the devil, who had suggested to Judas the design of betraying his Master, had acquired any further information from that time, that is to say, in the course of a few hours, with reference to the effects which Jesus Christ's Passion was to have. This dream was of a fearful character, since she who had it declares that it made her suffer much. It is conjectured, and with great probability, that the dream presaged to her the misfortunes which Pilate would draw down upon himself and his family, if he imbrued his hands in the blood of the Just. Every one knows that he was subsequently disgraced and banished, and that he perished by his own hand.

It may be asked what could be the design of God in sending this dream? To give additional testimony to the innocence of his Son, and to offer another grace to Pilate in order to withhold him upon the brink of injustice into which he was falling, are of themselves two motives worthy of the wisdom and the goodness of God. But if he had merely in view the salvation of this woman, this reason was more than sufficient for him; and, although the vision may not have had the effect for which it appears to have been more directly intended, viz., to hinder the judge from condemning the innocent—God, nevertheless, would still have reaped from it the fruit which his heart most earnestly desired, since the salvation of a single soul is dearer to Jesus Christ than his own life; for it is held that Pilate's wife is saved. Very ancient authors give her the name of Claudia Procula. This is also the name which the Greeks give her in their menologies, wherein they have placed her in the rank of the saints.



this just man for whom she was interested. If such was his answer, he deceived her; but it was because he had deceived himself. The cabal prevailed, and the mob was seduced. (*a*) "The chief priests and ancients moved the people, and persuaded them that they should ask Barabbas, and make Jesus away."

We know that the people are equally violent in their likings and dislikings; and also with what rapidity those who know how to manage them, can bring them from one extreme to the other. This was but the work of a moment for the Saviour's enemies. For it is probable that they only commenced their intrigues when Pilate proposed the choice between Jesus and Barabbas, as it was only then that the destiny of Jesus began to depend on the popular will; and the moment after, as we are going to show, this work was already completed. When, therefore, he had returned his wife's message, (*b*) "the governor said to them: Whether will you of the two to be released unto you? The whole multitude cried out: Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." Pilate, astonished, and wishing still to save Jesus, "again answering, saith to them: What will you, then, that I do to the king of the Jews—with Jesus, that is called Christ? but they all again cried out, saying: Crucify him! crucify him! He said to them the third time: Why, what evil hath this man done? I find no cause of death in him: I will chastise him, therefore," added he, falling back on his first idea, "and let him go. But they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and they cried out the more, saying: "Crucify him! let him be crucified!"

"Pilate, seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, taking water, washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it; and the whole people answering, said: His blood be upon us and upon our children."

The Eternal heard this horrible imprecation, and ratified it. More than eighteen centuries have passed away, and still this blood demands vengeance, and obtains it against the posterity of this unhappy people—God wishing to show the universe that a seduced multitude,

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 20; St. Mark, xv. 11.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 21–27; St. Luke, xxiii. 18–23; St. Mark, xv. 12–14.

although incomparably less culpable than its seducers, may still be sufficiently guilty to merit a fearful chastisement.

That furious populace at length overcame the governor, and the result might be anticipated. He who had been shaken by the solicitations of the priests, which he might have cut short by a single word, had not firmness enough to resist a seditious people who appeared to threaten rebellion. Thus, after the vain ceremony of washing his hands, or rather after having rendered against himself that glaring testimony of the injustice which he was about to commit, (*a*) "Pilate, being willing to satisfy the people, gave sentence that it should be as they required."

Consequently "he released unto them him who, for murder and sedition, had been cast into prison, whom they had desired."

It is questionable whether the sentence of death against the Saviour be comprised in these general terms which the governor employed. The flagellation which followed leaves this matter undecided: the scourging should precede the crucifixion according to the Roman laws, from which Pilate may not have wished to deviate upon this occasion. If we view it in this light, we must believe that Jesus was already condemned to the death of the cross; but, on the other hand, we have seen that Pilate entertained the notion of having him scourged with the design of saving his life, by affording this satisfaction to those who demanded his death; and we are soon to find him again endeavoring to turn it to this account. But was he still carrying out his original intention, or else, after having abandoned it by condemning the Saviour, did he recur to it out of compassion, or from remorse? It would be difficult to form an opinion on this subject. Whatever the case may be, at the very time when they were liberating Barabbas, (*b*) "Pilate took Jesus, and scourged him." The evangelists say nothing more about this affair, but the common opinion is, that this flagellation was carried to the last extreme of cruelty. There can be no doubt but that it was extremely cruel, since Pilate thought that, by exhibiting to the Jews the condition to which it had reduced the Saviour, he should at last succeed in melting them into compassion; but it does not appear to have

(*a*) St. Mark, xv. 15; St. Luke, xxiii. 24, 25. (*b*) St. John, xix. 1.



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been so extremely severe that Jesus could not survive it without a miracle. If such had been the case, Pilate would not have testified so much surprise when it was reported to him, three hours after the Saviour had been crucified, that he had already breathed his last.

This torment was immediately followed by another, either suggested by the hatred of the Jews, or invented by the brutality of the soldiers. The latter, (*a*) "taking Jesus into the court of the palace, gathered together unto him the whole band, and stripping him, they put a scarlet cloak about him. And platting a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand. Then they came to him, and bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews; and spitting upon him, they took the reed and struck his head, and they gave him blows."

CHAPTER LXVII.

ECCE HOMO.—PILATE'S SECOND INTERROGATION.—JESUS IS CONDEMNED.—HE CARRIES HIS CROSS.—SIMON THE CYRENEAN.—DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.—JESUS CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO THIEVES.—TITLE OF THE CROSS.—LOTS CAST FOR THE GARMENT.

After so many torments and so much contumely, the Jews should at last have been content. (*b*) "Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and saith to them: Behold, I bring him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in him. Jesus, therefore, came forth, bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment, and Pilate saith to them: Behold the man!" The people became silent, and perhaps compassion began to work upon them; but "when the chief priests and the servants had seen him, they cried out: Crucify him! crucify him! Pilate," feeling himself once more mistaken, and piqued at this discomfiture, "saith to them," in a sharp tone: "Take him

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 27–30; St. Mark, xv. 16–19; St. John, xix. 3.
(*b*) St. John, xix. 4–7.

you, and crucify him; for I find no cause in him. The Jews answered him: We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."

Thus, they substituted for the state offence of which Pilate did not find him guilty, a crime against religion, which, it seems, he must take on their testimony—not being sufficiently conversant with their law to judge the case himself; however, this expression, which escaped them in the heat of their passion, was very near depriving them of their victim. The governor did not regard Jesus as an ordinary man. The wisdom of his answers, his unalterable patience, his heroic firmness—all this, combined with Pilate's own avowal of his innocence, and what he had learned concerning his miracles, had already inspired him with sentiments of veneration for the Saviour's person. He learned, moreover, that he announced himself as the Son of God; was he not such, in point of fact? Not in the sense of eternal generation, which was far above the comprehension of a Pagan; but such as paganism might fancy him to be—begotten by some of the immortals (1)—whose vengeance would not fail to burst upon those who should imbrue their hands in the blood of his Son. "When Pilate, therefore, had heard this saying, he feared the more, and he entered into the hall again, and he said to Jesus: Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate, therefore, said to him: Speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee?"

This power, which hath never yet intimidated the just man who fears not death, could still less affect the Man-God, who rather desired it. Wherefore, very far from flattering the governor's pride, Jesus gave him a lesson very proper to inspire men in office with modesty, by reminding them from whom they hold their authority, and to whom they are responsible: "Thou shouldst not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above; therefore," added the Saviour, "he that hath delivered me to thee hath the greater sin."

This last expression, which regarded his accusers, seems to signify that the most criminal of all murders is that of delivering up an in-

(1) *Saint Cyrillus, lib.* 12, *cap.* 20.

nocent individual to legitimate judges, so as to deprive him by their sentence of both honor and life. But the judge who is weak enough or corrupt enough to be instrumental in the execution of such designs, if he be not always the most wicked of all assassins, is he not at least the most infamous? This inference, which the Saviour did not formally express, might easily have been drawn by Pilate; and as it came directly home to him, it is not surprising if "from henceforth Pilate sought to release him." But he sought in vain. The people had too well discovered the ascendency which their clamors had secured them over this weak judge, to allow themselves to be turned aside from their purpose. "The Jews cried out [*therefore*], saying: If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend; for whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." Pilate could not withstand this last attack. "When Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in the place that is called Lithostrotos, and in the Hebrew Gabbatha. It was the parasceve of the pasch, about the sixth hour, and he saith to the Jews: Behold your king. But they cried out: Away with him! away with him! crucify him! Shall I crucify your king? Pilate saith to them" again, and this expression was, as it were, the last sigh of expiring justice. (*a*) "The chief priests answered: We have no king but Cæsar. Then, therefore, he delivered up Jesus to their will;" that is to say, "he delivered him unto them to be crucified." Behold, then, the issue of Pilate's judgment, after he had so many times declared him innocent. What more could he have done if he had found him guilty? And what does justice avail in the heart of a man who has not courage to defend it against unjust passion, only to render himself unjust whilst he yields with a repugnance which does not save the innocent, and which renders himself only the more inexcusable?

Meanwhile Jesus (*b*) "delivered himself," without murmur, "to him that judged him unjustly," and, by his silence, he verified still further the prophecy which compared him to a lamb, which, far from defending itself, does not even oppose a cry to the knife that is going to slaughter it (*c*). The soldiers, charged with the execution,

(*a*) St. John, xix. 15–17; St. Luke, xxiii. 25; St. Matthew, xxvii. 26.

(*b*) I. St. Peter, ii. 23.

(*c*) St. John, xix. 16, 17; St. Mark, xv. 20.

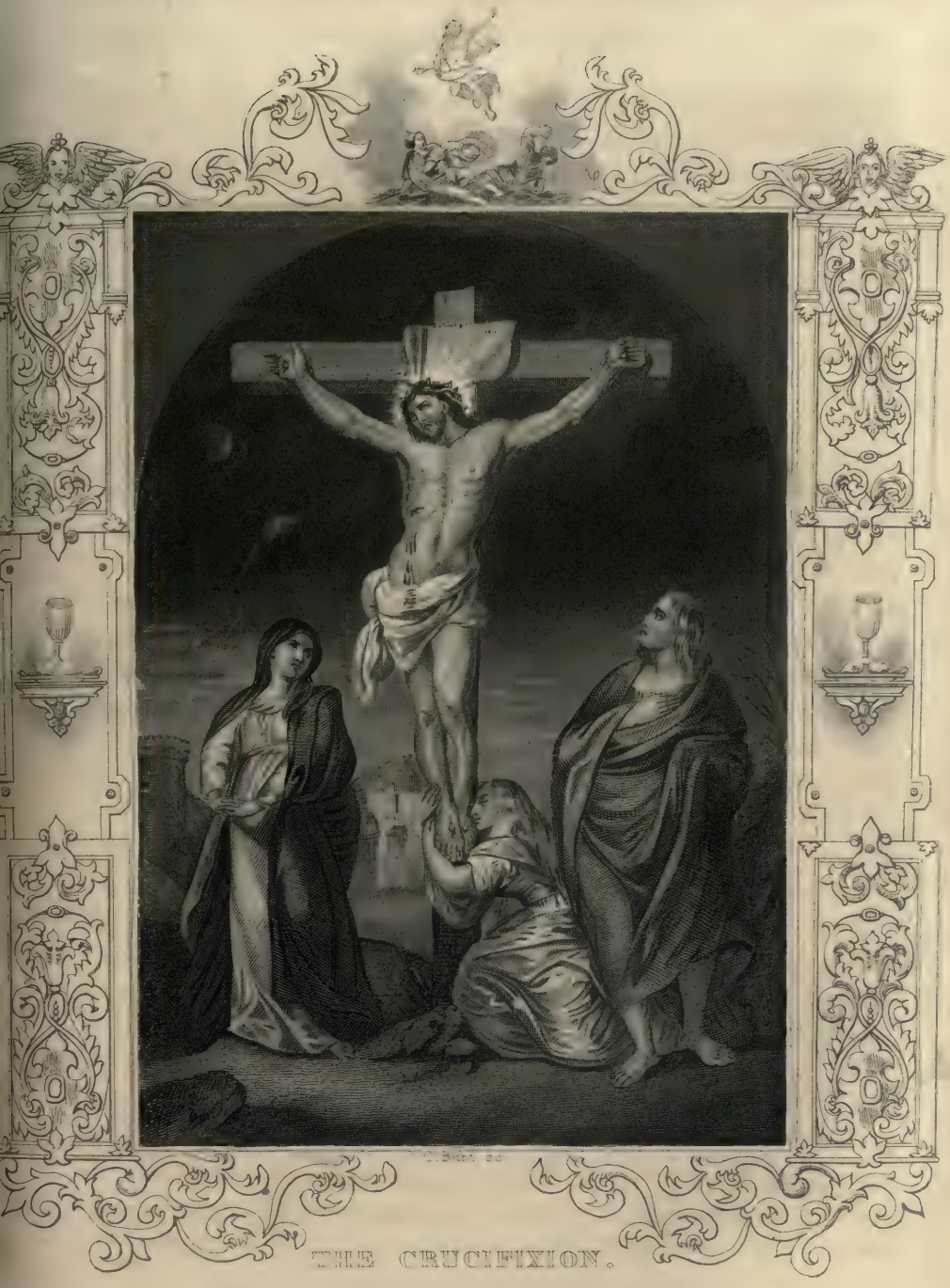
"took Jesus," and did as they liked with him. "They took off the purple from him; they put his own garments on him, and they led him out to crucify him. Jesus, bearing his own cross, went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgotha."

There was a custom amongst the Romans, that those who were to be crucified should themselves carry their cross to the place of execution. There was, therefore, nothing extraordinary in this with regard to the Saviour. But Jesus, exhausted with loss of blood, soon sank under the burden. His excessive weakness gave reason to fear that he might escape the extreme penalty, or at least retard the moment of execution so earnestly desired by his enemies. This apprehension prompted them to relieve him, when chance, or rather Providence, presented to them the man whom God had chosen to succor his Son in this mournful emergency. "As they led Jesus away (*a*), going out," from the city (2), "they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon, the father of Alexander and of Rufus, who passed by, coming out of the country. Him they forced to take up his cross, and they laid the cross on him, to carry after Jesus." We should think that he yielded to force alone, and with the utmost repugnance; but when he—through the light of faith which subsequently illumined his mind—discovered that he had the honor of relieving his Saviour, of co-operating in the world's salvation, and of being the figure of those who should carry the cross after Jesus Christ and follow him—that is to say, of the predestined in every age—we can conceive that his lot seemed truly enviable to him, as

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 26; St. Matthew, xxvii. 32; St. Mark, xv. 21.

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(2) St. Matthew says only, *and going out*, they found....Simon....him they forced to carry the cross. And on the other hand St. John says: Jesus went forth bearing his own cross—which obliges us, for the purpose of reconciling these two evangelists, to distinguish two egresses, one from the court-house, and then Jesus carried his cross; the other from the city, at which latter egress the executioners took the cross from him in order to make Simon carry it. Thus Jesus carried his cross all the way through Jerusalem, and Simon was afterwards made to bear it from the city gates to the top of Calvary. They apparently thought that Jesus, who had had strength enough to bear it when he walked upon level ground, had not sufficient strength to carry it up the mountain-side. Perhaps his strength failed him, in point of fact; for we must recollect that human nature was then abandoned to all its natural weakness.



C. Bodet, del.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

"And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, they Crucified Him there"

it has always appeared to those pious souls, who have wished that they could have been associated with him in so glorious a ministry.

Meantime, (*a*) "there followed Jesus a great multitude of people, and of women, who bewailed and lamented him. But, turning to them, he said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days shall come wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren! and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck! Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us. For, if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?"

(*b*) "There were also two other malefactors," loaded, no doubt, with their crosses according to the usual custom, "led with him to be put to death." It was in such company as this that "They bring him into the place called Golgotha, which," as we have already said, "being interpreted, is the place of Calvary."

(*c*) "When they were come to the place, they gave him wine to drink, mingled with myrrh [*and*] gall (3). And when he had tasted, he would not drink. It was the third hour they crucified him (4). With him they crucified two thieves; the one on his right

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 27–31.
(*b*) St. Luke, xxiii. 32; St. Mark, xv. 22; St. Matthew, xxvii. 33.
(*c*) St. Luke, xxiii. 33; St. Matthew, xxvii. 34; St. Mark, xv. 25, 27, 28; St. John, xix. 18.

(3) St. Matthew speaks only of the gall, and not of the myrrh; St. Mark of the myrrh and not of the gall; one does not exclude the other, and this is the reason why we have combined them. Was this beverage in use in similar circumstances, or was it not? was it given with a view to strengthen the patient, or to stupefy him, or perhaps to torment him the more? was gall always mingled with it, or was it mixed with it on this occasion through the malice of the Saviour's enemies? Nothing certain can be advanced upon these several heads. Jesus tasted it in order to obey, in order to suffer, in order to expiate our acts of intemperance, and in order to accomplish the prophecies. We are unaware of the reason why he did not wish to swallow it, if it was not, according to a pious interpretation, in order to show that he has tasted the bitterness of sin, because he bore the pain thereof, but that he has not swallowed its poison, because sin has never penetrated into his soul, always pure and always holy.

(4) It is St. Mark who makes this statement, and it seems to be in contradiction to St. John, who conveys that the sentence of condemnation was pronounced *about the sixth hour*. St. Jerome, and after him Theophylactus, have thought that there existed in the text of St. Mark an error made by the copyists, that the Greek letter which expresses

hand, and the other on his left, and Jesus in the midst. [*Thus*] the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith: With the wicked was he reputed."

The Deicide was consummated; all that remained was—to avenge it. Jesus had only to speak. It seems that he had only to remain silent, and to allow the thunderbolt to fall and crush the authors and the executioners of a crime so atrocious. One would almost say that he feared such a result, so eager was he to ward it off. Scarcely was he fastened to the cross, and it elevated upon the mountain, when (*a*) "he said," and this was the first word which he pronounced, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

We should not omit a circumstance of the Saviour's passion that the Holy Ghost has judged worthy to be inserted in the recital thereof dictated by him to the sacred writers. (*b*) "Pilate wrote," according to the prevailing custom, "a title, and he put it upon the cross. The inscription of his cause was written over" it in these terms: "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. This title, therefore, many of the Jews did read; because the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin. The chief priests" considered

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 34.
(*b*) St. John, xix. 19, 20; St. Mark, xxv. 26; St. Matthew, xxvii. 37.

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the number three had slipped into the place of that which expresses the number six. Nothing is more easy in appearance. Nevertheless this conjecture has been abandoned, because no copy of St. Mark has been found in which we read that the Saviour was crucified at the sixth hour. Now what is read in all the copies should be retained, and it is allowable to correct one by the other only when variations occur. If we did not respect this limitation at least, what could remain entire in the text? Other interpreters have imagined ways of dividing the day into four parts; according to these, the third hour of St. Mark would correspond with the sixth hour of St. John. The real and known division of the night into four watches has suggested this notion to them and seems to support it. Unfortunately they do not cite examples of this division of the day into four parts, nor of the name *hours* having been given to these parts, each of which should be composed of three hours. We must acknowledge that the difficulty has not been cleared up, and let it suffice for us to believe that according to a certain way of reckoning which is unknown to us, but which was not unknown at the time when St. Mark wrote, this evangelist may have called the *third* that which St. John called the *sixth* hour. It is sufficient for faith that a thing is not impossible, and assuredly this is not.

themselves insulted by this; and probably with some reason, according to their construction of the matter. It was offering an insult to the nation to style him king of the Jews, whom the chief men of the nation, followed by the majority of the people, had just delivered over to the extreme penalty. They (*a*) "said, therefore, to Pilate: Write not, The king of the Jews; but that he said, I am the king of the Jews. Pilate answered: "What I have written, I have written," and dismissed them with this curt reply.

It might have been that the governor then thought only of getting rid of their importunities, which he must have found extremely tiresome; perhaps, also, that after his previous cowardice, he wished at last to make a show of firmness: the pleasure also of being revenged for the violence which the Jews had just offered to him, may also have had its share in producing this effect. Whatever his motive may have been—and it is not very easy to ascertain—he executed, without knowing it, the orders of the Most High. It was God who had dictated what the judge had written, and restrained his hand so that the inscription was not effaced. It was by means of the rood that the Man-God was to reign; and by affixing him to it they had placed him, if we may use the expression, upon the throne of his royalty. It was also necessary to proclaim him king, and Pilate—a Gentile—did this officially, notwithstanding the opposition and the indignation of the Jewish people. This was a sensible figure of what soon after occurred, when these murderers obstinately refusing to have Jesus reign over them, the Gentile people willingly recognized him not only for their king, but for their God and Saviour. In vain did the Jews do their utmost to prevent this recognition, and they were made the unwilling witnesses of the Saviour's triumph, unwittingly adding to the lustre of his glory by their impotent rage and deadly animosity.

Nothing is of trifling importance in so great an event; and, if it were only for this reason, we ought not be surprised that the sacred writers should have reported the fact which the reader is about to see. But there is another reason which renders it worthy of notice, viz.: the literal fulfilment of the prophecies in a circumstance so slight and so accidental, that the mind—which has foreseen and

(*a*) St. John, xix. 21, 22.

predicted it—can alone be that infinite intelligence, to whom all ages are present, and who, in all events, perceives even the most imperceptible and most arbitrary details. Here is the fact which has occasioned these reflections: (*a*) "The soldiers, therefore, when they had crucified him, took his garments [and they made four parts, to every soldier (5) a part] and also his coat (6). Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said then one to another: Let us not cut it; but let us cast lots (7) for it, whose it shall be; that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, saying: They have parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they have cast lots. The soldiers indeed did these things. [*After which*] they sat and watched him."

(*a*) St. John, xix. 23, 24; St. Matthew, xxvii. 35, 36.

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(5) Four soldiers were therefore engaged at the execution, which gives greater probability to the opinion of those who think that Jesus Christ was fastened to the cross by four nails.

(6) This coat or tunic had been woven, it is said, by the Blessed Virgin, when Jesus was still a child. It therefore grew with his growth, and was not worn away. We have no positive proof of this fact; but the tradition thereof is very ancient; it has never been contradicted, and there is nothing here in miracles which should surprise us. It is not at all unreasonable, and it is always more pious to respect such traditions than to despise them.

The coat or tunic of the Saviour, was a figure of his spouse the church, which is one and indivisible, because it always maintains itself in one and the same faith, and in one and the same charity.

It is said of those who create schism in the church, that they rend the garment of Jesus Christ; that is to say, that they try to do so, though they never can succeed. We may regard them as rags, badly assorted and worse stitched, which, when they detach themselves from it take away nothing of its integrity, and are themselves no longer good for any thing but to be cast into the fire.

(7) It is commonly held that the garments were also divided by lot, because it was scarcely possible that the parts could be perfectly equal. This may lead us to conclude that the Saviour's apparel, without being rich, had still some value, and—as many think—that it was suitable and becoming.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

BLASPHEMIES AND INSULTS.—THE GOOD THIEF.—THE WORDS OF JESUS TO HIS MOTHER.—DARKNESS.—JESUS DIES.—PRODIGIES.—THE SAVIOUR'S SIDE PIERCED.—BURIAL.—DESCENT INTO HELL.

JESUS, a prey to the most excruciating pain, was also exposed to the most harrowing insults. (*a*) "They that passed by blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying: Bah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it, save thy own self; if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. The people stood beholding, and the rulers with them derided him (1)," for they were not ashamed to join the multitude; and—forgetting what they owed to themselves—they gave vent to their joy with the same coarseness and the same effrontery. Thus they were not ashamed to do that which would have disgraced the very lowest rabble. (*b*) "In like manner also, the chief priests, with the Scribes and ancients, mocking, said: He saved others (2); himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God: let him now deliver *him* if he will have him; for he said: I am the Son of God."

(*c*) David had them in view when he put these words into the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 39, 40; St. Luke, xxiii. 35.

(*b*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 41.

(*c*) Psalm xxi. 9.

(1) A fresh proof of his innocence. Justice has no longer any other sentiment than compassion for the criminal whom it is obliged to punish. Passion alone continues to insult the innocent victim whom it immolates to its fury. Whilst they thus outraged the Just by excellence, they said nothing to the two robbers, or if they thought of them at all it was apparently but to pity them. There is a measure of suffering which satisfies justice, but there is none that can glut envy and hatred.

(2) *He saved others,* that is to say, he has wrought miracles for others, and he cannot work them for himself. This was tacitly acknowledging the truth of his miracles, and taking occasion therefrom to insult him the more. It is not for want of miracles, nor is it often for want of believing in miracles that the wicked are wicked; it is solely because they wish to be so.

mouth of the impious oppressors of the just; and, without wishing or knowing it, they were instrumental in accomplishing this prophecy. They were also heard to say: (*a*) "Let him also save himself, if he be Christ the elect of God; let Christ the king of Israel come down now from the cross that we may see and believe (3). The soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar; and saying: If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself." And to put the finishing stroke to these outrages, "the self-same thing the thieves also that were crucified with him reproached him with."

He whom they treated so unworthily was only anxious to save them, and his grace effected at this moment one of its most illustrious conquests. (*b*) Whilst "one of those robbers who were hanged, blasphemed him, saying: If thou be Christ, save thyself and us; the other," suddenly enlightened, and changed into another man, "answering, rebuked him, saying: Neither dost thou fear God! seeing thou art under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done no evil."

The work of conversion is far advanced, when the sinner confesses his iniquity and the justice of the chastisement which he receives for it. The knowledge of God's goodness, and a loving confidence in his mercies, finish and perfect the change. Penetrated with this second sentiment, which, in this fortunate man, was the consequence and perhaps the reward of the first,—"He said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom." By this prayer he confessed that Jesus is the king of the world to come; and the sense of the mysterious answer given by the Saviour to Pilate was fully revealed to him. All faith is comprised in this confession, but what renders it most surprising is the occasion whereon he rendered to Jesus so glorious a testimony. His salvation was the

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 35–37; St. Mark, xv. 32; St. Matthew, xxvii. 44.
(*b*) St. Luke, xxiii. 39–43.

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(3) No, it is not true that they would have believed in him if he had come down from the cross; for, as we shall soon see, they were convinced of the truth of his resurrection, and yet were only the more hardened. All those who ask for miracles do not speak sincerely.

reward which it obtained for him, and he received at the moment an assurance thereof. "Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise (4)."

An object still more interesting to Jesus soon attracted his attention, and gave him the opportunity of fulfilling one of the first duties prescribed by nature, in order to teach us that he is not come to destroy, but to perfect the natural law. "His mother," whom the most excruciating anguish ever felt by mortal could not deter from following him to the fatal spot; (*a*) "his mother and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen, stood by the cross of Jesus. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that he saith to his disciple: Behold thy mother (5). And from that hour that disciple took her to his own (6)."

(*a*) St. John, xix. 25–27.

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(4) It may be asked what this paradise was, which could neither be heaven, for it was not open to men until ascension-day, nor the terrestrial paradise, which no longer existed, at least since the deluge. It appears to be the bosom of Abraham, which, for the just, entirely purified, was a place of repose, and might be regarded as that of imperfect felicity. Might we not say that it is no longer permissible to doubt, after this expression of Jesus Christ: This day thou shalt be *with me* in paradise; for it is a matter of faith that upon that day Jesus Christ descended into Limbo, and he declares formally, that he and the robber shall be reunited on that very day in the same place.

(5) We have already said that it was very probable that St. Joseph had died before the preaching of Jesus Christ: this proves at least that he was dead at the time of the Passion; for if he had then been alive, there would have been no need of the Saviour's recommending his mother to another.

The virgin mother was given in charge to the virgin disciple. The holy Fathers assign also as a cause for this favor the tender and generous attachment of the disciple, which made him follow his master to the place of execution. He fled at first, like the other disciples, but he was the only one who returned. With God, there is always an opportunity for returning.

(6) A difficulty is here raised on the ground that the apostles, who had quitted all, had no longer any residence to call their own. St. John had still his mother Salome, with whom he doubtless lodged, and to her house he would naturally conduct the Blessed Virgin, to whom the society of this holy woman could not be otherwise than agreeable.

Interpreters say that St. John here represented all the faithful, and that in adopting him Mary adopted us all. It is from this that Mary's panegyrists have taken occasion to say that the Eternal Father, having chosen her to be the mother of his only Son, wished that she should be also the mother of all those who, by the character of divine

(*a*) "It was almost the sixth hour; and there was darkness (7) over all the earth (8) until the ninth hour, when the sun was darkened (9). At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabacthani? which is, being interpreted: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me (10)?"

This desertion was undoubtedly the most grievous of all his pains. But, as this pain was wholly interior, it could not be seen as his bodily sufferings were; and it was to make it known to us that he spoke these mournful words. The expression was very far from being then understood; so much so, that through ignorance of the sacred language in which Jesus spoke, (*b*) "some of the standers-by hearing, said: Behold he calleth Elias."

(*c*) "Afterwards, Jesus knowing that all things were now ac-

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 44, 45; St. Mark, xv. 34.
(*b*) St. Mark, xv. 35.
(*c*) St. John, xix. 28–30; St. Matt., xxvii. 48, 49; St. Mark, xv. 36; St. Luke, xxiii. 46.

adoption, became his own children, and that Mary's maternity is as unlimited as the paternity of God.

(7) This darkness commenced a little after the crucifixion, and cleared away shortly before Jesus expired. It was the mourning of nature for the death of its author.

(8) Several interpreters understand by the whole earth, the whole country, that is to say, Judea. The most common opinion is that the darkness was actually spread over the whole earth. The scanty information gleaned from history with reference to this memorable fact, proves that it extended far beyond Judea. This was not palpable darkness such as fell upon Egypt: it was the obscurity of a clear night during which we can see the heavens and the stars, for they were then visible, as is reported by Phlegon, a pagan author, who was then living, and wrote an account of what he saw.

(9) Some say that it ceased to give light because of the subtraction of its rays; others assert that the moon, having changed her natural course, was placed miraculously between the sun and the earth. The second cause is that which is spoken of in the letter of St. Denis the Areopagite to St. Polycarpe. The first seems to have been necessary in order that the darkness should be universal, as we are given to understand by all the chronicles wherein mention is made of this prodigy. This point, like many others, remains undecided.

(10) These words are the first of Psalm xxi. We find in this psalm the principal circumstances of the passion so clearly marked out, that it is regarded as one of the most striking prophecies thereof. It is the human nature in Jesus Christ that complains to the Eternal Father of being abandoned by him without defence to the rage of his enemies, and left a prey to the most acute sufferings without any sensible consolation. This complaint was accompanied with resignation, and was, moreover, respectful. It was not therefore a cry of despair, as was said by Calvin, who added this new blasphemy to all those which Jesus Christ had to bear from the Jews.

complished," with the exception of a slight circumstance which his infinite penetration singled out from amidst that crowd of prophecies which regarded his person, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled (11)" without failing in a single point, "said: I thirst. There was a vessel set there full of vinegar. Immediately one of them running, took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, and putting it upon a reed gave him to drink. And the others said: Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to deliver him." He who presented the drink said with the others: "Stay, let us see if Elias come to take him down. Jesus, when he had taken the vinegar," and having ascertained, by a last glance, that nothing was wanting to his sacrifice, "said: It is consummated. And, crying with a loud voice (12), he said: Father, into thy hands I commend my (13) spirit. And saying this, bowing his head, he gave up the ghost."

Here ended the power of evil. The divine power, which had

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(11) What was then accomplished is the second part of this versicle of Psalm lxviii: They gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst *they gave me vinegar to drink.* The first part had its fulfillment before the crucifixion, when they offered to the Saviour wine mingled with gall.

(12) The death on the cross was one which drained the body of all its strength and blood. This cry was therefore supernatural: and was regarded as miraculous by those who heard it. *The Centurion....* seeing that crying out in this manner he had given up the ghost, said: *indeed this man was the Son of God.* Such a display of strength in a state of extreme exhaustion showed well that Jesus died because he wished it, and at the moment when he wished. It verified that expression which he had previously made use of: *I have power to lay it* (my life) *down;* and I have power to take it up (St. John, x. 18). The expression *it is consummated* also signified the same thing, for Jesus Christ meant to say: I have suffered all that I had to suffer, and now I have only to die. To speak thus, and to die immediately after, was evidently dying when he wished to die.

(13) All Christians should die with this expression on their lips, although when uttered by them it has a different meaning from that which it had when coming from the lips of Jesus Christ. The Man-God recommended his soul to his Father as a deposit confided to the person most beloved, until the moment when it is proper to resume it. Sinful man is always uncertain of his salvation, and he recommends his soul to the mercy of God, in order that he may not treat him according to the rigor of his justice.

We recommend the soul, and not the body; because the destiny of the body depends upon that of the soul. If the soul be saved, so also is the body; and if the soul be lost, the body is lost with it.

The Church has placed the *In manus* at the end of the evening office. The reason is because the sleep which we are going to take is the image of death—and that it has occurred more than once that the figure was changed into reality.

kept itself concealed until the consummation of the sacrifice, burst forth on the instant, and displayed the glory of the Man-God amid all the horrors of extreme punishment, and from out the shades of death. He had scarcely expired, (*a*) "and behold the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened.' This latter prodigy was preparatory to another which did not occur until the third day after. "Many bodies of the saints that had slept arose (14), and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many."

Thus did insensible creatures testify sensibility at the death of their author. Their example, if we may so speak, produced its effect. Would to God that, in general, it had been lasting! But it did happen that—in this crisis of all nature and this shock of the entire universe—men appeared to blush at being harder than the stones and rocks. First of all, (*b*) "The centurion who stood over against him, seeing what was done, that crying out in this manner he had given up the ghost, glorified God, saying: Indeed this was a just man; indeed he was the Son of God. They that were with him watching Jesus, having seen the earthquake and the things that were done, were sore afraid, saying: Indeed, this was the Son of God (15). And all the multitude of them that were come together

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 51–53.
(*b*) St. Mark, xv. 39; St. Luke, xxiii. 47, 48; St. Matthew, xxvii. 54.

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(14) It is not decided whether these saints arose before Jesus Christ did, or whether they arose so as never to die again. We must hold as certain that, in the latter case, their resurrection could only have taken place after that of the Saviour, who is called in Scripture *the first-fruits of them that sleep* (1 Cor. xv.), and *the first-born of the dead* (Colos. i. Apoc. i.). The most common opinion is that they arose after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, never to die again, and that they followed him to heaven on the day of his ascension. Thus they were the pledge, and, as it were, the figure of the second ascension, which shall take place at the end of ages, when, after having judged the living and the dead, Jesus Christ shall ascend again into heaven, and shall conduct thither all the elect, in body and soul, that they may reign there eternally with him.

(15) He was reproached for having stated falsely that he was the Son of God, because he had allowed himself to be fastened to the cross, and that he could not descend therefrom. He is still fastened to the cross, and dies thereon, yet we have a public announcement made that *indeed* this was the Son of God. Already are the blasphemies of his enemies converted into a confession of his Divinity.

to that sight, and saw the things that were done, returned striking their breasts."

Others, who were still more afflicted, but without remorse, could not tear themselves away from so dear an object. (*a*) "All his acquaintance, and many women stood afar off looking on and beholding these things. Among whom were Mary Magdalen, Mary (16) the mother of James the less and of Joseph, and Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, who also when he was in Galilee followed him and ministered to him. Many other women that came up with him to Jerusalem" were also present.

The Jews, in all that they had attempted against the Saviour, had only been enabled (*b*) "to do what thy hand and thy counsel decreed to be done." They could never make him suffer any thing else but what God had resolved that he should suffer; and because God did not wish that he should suffer another kind of punishment which they further destined for him, the idea did not strike them until after his death. It was still zeal for the law which appeared to animate them upon this occasion. The law ordained (*c*) that the bodies of those who had been fastened to a gibbet, should be taken thence before the close of day. They must needs hurry, because the time for doing such a deed was very soon to expire. Then, (*d*) "because it was the parasceve" (the solemnity of which commenced at sunset) "that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day (for that was a great Sabbath-day) the Jews besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers therefore came, and they broke the legs of the

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiii. 49; St. Matt. xxvii. 55, 56; St. Mark, xv. 40, 41.
(*b*) Acts, iv. 28.
(*c*) Deuteronomy, xxi. 23.
(*d*) St. John, xix. 31–37.

(16) The same who has just been called Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and sister to the Blessed Virgin. We have followed the recital of St. John, who places her with Mary Magdalen at the foot of the cross. Others of the evangelists represent them as keeping at a distance. There is yet no contradiction in this. St. John informs us where they were stationed immediately after Jesus had been fastened to the cross. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke tell us where they stood after Jesus had expired. In the space of three hours it might easily have happened that they were obliged to change their position.

first, and of the other that was crucified with him. When they came to Jesus, and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one of the soldiers opened his side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water (17). And he that saw it, gave testimony, and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true, that you also may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture might be fulfilled: You shall not break a bone of him. Again, another Scripture saith: They shall look on him whom they pierced (18)."

Meantime, it was necessary to think of the interment of the Saviour, and it was thought of by two men, who rendered to him this last duty with all the zeal inspired by an ardent affection for his person, and with a splendor worthy of their opulence. God who began to glorify the flesh of his Son, had inspired them with the design, and gave them courage to carry it into execution. About an hour had elapsed after Jesus had expired, (*a*) "and when it was evening, there came a certain rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph. [*He was*] a noble counsellor, a good and a just man, who also himself was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly (19), for fear of the

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 57; St. Mark, xv. 43–46; St. Luke, xxiii. 50–52; St. John, xix. 38–40.

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(17) Natural and elementary water. If it be said that such could not take place without a miracle, we acknowledge the truth of the assertion. If it be said that this was not natural and elementary water, such an assertion would be opposed to all tradition, and might also be regarded as erroneous.

According to the explanation of the Holy Fathers, baptism was signified by the water, and the Eucharist by the blood. This is the reason why they add that the Church has come forth from the side of Jesus Christ when dead, as Eve had originated from the side of Adam when asleep, because the faithful who compose the body of the church are formed by baptism and nourished by the Eucharist; and because baptism and the Eucharist are the two principal sacraments, and those to which all the others have reference. This has also made the Holy Fathers say that all the sacraments have proceeded from the side of Jesus Christ.

(18) They looked upon him in the very place where they had pierced him. They shall see him again, but with what inexpressible terror! they shall look upon him, but it shall be upon the last day when he shall present to his murderers the scars of his wounds in testimony of their Deicide. It is St. John who in the Apocalypse, refers to this period, the perfect accomplishment of this prophecy: *Behold, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him* (Apoc. i.).

(19) There are therefore circumstances wherein one may be justified in keeping his

Jews. The same had not consented to their counsel and doings, who also himself looked for the kingdom of God. This man came and went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. But Pilate wondered that he should be already dead, and sending for the centurion, he asked him if he were already dead. When he had understood it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph, [*who*] came and took away the body. And Nicodemus also came—he who at first came to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes (20), about an hundred pound weight. Joseph buying fine linen (21), and taking Jesus down, wrapped him up in the fine linen;—they bound the body in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury."

(*a*) "Now there was in the place where he was crucified, a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein no man yet had been laid. There therefore, because of the parasceve of the Jews, because the sepulchre was nigh at hand (22) he laid the body in his own new monument which he had hewed out in a rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and went his way. It was the day of the parasceve, and the Sabbath drew on.

(*a*) St. John, xix. 41, 42; St. Mark, xv. 46; St. Matthew, xxvii. 60, 61; St. Luke, xxiii. 54–56.

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religion secret without ceasing to be *a good and a just man.* Since Scripture thus denominates Joseph of Arimathea, this is a truth which we are not permitted to doubt, but it is very easy to make an abuse of it.

(20) Whilst the declared disciples fly and conceal themselves, the concealed appear and declare themselves. The first is a proof of human infirmity; the second displays the virtue of the cross.

(21) The sheet was also of linen. Hence arose the custom, at the sacrifice of the Mass, to lay the body of Jesus Christ upon linen, to the exclusion of every other texture. St. Jerome made this remark nearly 1400 years ago.

(22) Every occurrence which appears here accidental, is arranged by Providence; for it was requisite that the sepulchre should be near to Calvary, in order to give time for bearing thither the body of Jesus, and inclosing it therein, before the repose of the Sabbath commenced. It was also proper that this sepulchre should be entirely new, and that no person should have been hitherto interred there, in order that it might imitate in its way the purity of Mary, and that no question might ever be mooted as to whether the man who arose from the dead was not some other person besides Jesus. It was also necessary that it should be hewn out of a rock, lest any suspicion should arise of its having been broken open, and the body carried secretly away.

There were there Mary Magdalen and the other Mary that were come with Jesus from Galilee, sitting over against the sepulchre. They saw the sepulchre, and how his body was laid," for it was with this design that they "were following after" the funeral procession. "And, returning, they prepared spices and ointments; and on the Sabbath-day they rested, according to the commandment (23)."

The enemies of Jesus were not so scrupulous. These rigid observers of rest on the holy day—who had so often impeached the Saviour with the crime of having violated it by operating miraculous cures—now violated it in their turn with the design of burying his religion and its author in the same tomb. Jesus, as we have seen, had often foretold that he would rise again the third day after his death. His disciples had forgotten it; but not so his persecutors. Doubtless they had no idea that the prophecy would be accomplished; therefore they could scarcely have any other intention than to attest the non-accomplishment, in order to demonstrate thereby to the whole universe that Jesus was a false prophet: for, the apprehension of any attempt on the part of his disciples had too little foundation to be any thing else than a pretext. Whatever might have been their motive, (*a*) "The next day, which followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying: Sir, we have remembered that that seducer (24) said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxvii. 62–66.

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(23) The bodies were usually embalmed by women. These women could not effect it. Circumstances had obliged them to relinquish the care to men. They hoped indeed to return to it, and to finish perfectly an operation which they deemed to have been rather precipitately done. Jesus Christ was well pleased with their zeal, but he did not permit them to proceed with the execution of their project.

(24) Jesus Christ has suffered himself, said St. Augustin, to be called a seducer, for the consolation of his servants, whenever it occurs that the same denomination is affixed to them. The name is also given to real seducers; and in all disputes concerning faith, the orthodox and the heretic mutually assign the epithet to each other. It is truth upon one side, and calumny upon the other. Nor is it always easy for the people to discriminate between both; and yet it is of paramount importance to them not to be mistaken in the matter. To whom, then, shall the people have recourse? To the Church. Let the people consult the Church, and let them rest assured that he whom the Church recognizes as orthodox is orthodox, no matter who may style him a

rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day inclusively, lest his disciples come, and steal him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them: You have a guard; go, guard it as you know (25). They departing made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting guards."

All these measures were necessary to render incontestible the miracle of the resurrection, and never did human passions better second the designs of Divine Providence. Nevertheless, him whom they so carefully guarded was (*a*) "free amongst the dead, being put to death indeed in the flesh, but enlivened in the spirit;" and he whom the Jews regarded as their captive, was actually breaking the fetters of a whole people. (*b*) "Descended into the lower parts of the earth, he preached to those spirits that were in prison," and the Gospel penetrated with him into those gloomy regions. It is thought that his holy soul spent there all the time that it was separated from his sacred body. It was occupied there in unfolding to the just therein detained, the great mystery of the redemption which had just been wrought, and announcing to them their deliverance and their approaching entry into heaven which was now at last to be thrown open, after having been so long closed against human nature. Of this they had already a foretaste in the joy which his presence gave them. It is even held, and this opinion is the most common and the best authorized, that he communicated to them even then the clear vision of God, which constitutes the essential felicity of paradise, and that it was also in this sense that he promised to the good thief that on that very day he should be with him in paradise.

(*a*) Psalm lxxxvii. 5; 1 Peter, iii. 18. (*b*) Ephes., iv. 9; 1 Peter, iii. 19.

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seducer; and that he whom the Church treats as a seducer is a seducer, even if he were regarded as orthodox by the rest of the world.

(25) They had a guard at their command, for the purpose of guarding the temple. Pilate's answer naturally leads us to believe that this is the guard which he permits them to make use of. What may have rendered his permission necessary is, that this guard was not to be employed beyond the precincts of the temple without the consent of the governor.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE RESURRECTION.—THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.—THE SOLDIERS FRIGHTENED.—THE STONE RAISED.—JOURNEY OF THE WOMEN.—RACE OF PETER AND OF JOHN.—APPARITION TO MAGDALEN.—APPARITION TO THE OTHER WOMEN.—RETURN OF THE GUARDS TO JERUSALEM, AND THEIR DEPOSITION.

We have now arrived at that great event which the Saviour's enemies had so dreaded, and for which his disciples scarcely dared to hope. His humiliations ended with his mortal life. His glory, which shall never end, commences with the immortal life which he resumes on the third day after his death and burial. God has not chosen to reveal to us the precise moment of its occurrence, so that we can only form conjectures on this point. It is commonly thought that the resurrection took place before sunrise, but not till after the dawn. We have already remarked that Jesus had declared in formal terms that he should be three days and three nights in the bowels of the earth. In order that the prophecy might be literally accomplished, it was necessary that he should still be there on the third day until there was already light upon the earth to enable a person to say positively—it is day. As one instant was sufficient for this, so the appearance of the light was quite enough. It was therefore in the interval between dawn and sunrise that Jesus Christ arose by his own power, leaving on the floor of his sepulchre the linen cloths in which he had been wrapped, so that they might be as witnesses both of his death and his resurrection. He arose without noise and without any visible splendor, and went forth from the tomb without hurt or fracture, even as he had come from the womb of his blessed mother. The stone was not displaced, but penetrated by the subtility of his glorified body. The guards did not perceive it, and the terror in which they are represented at the sight of the Man-God emerging from the tomb is merely the imagination of painters. That which caused their fear was the earthquake and the apparition of the angel, as we are now about to see in the recital of what occurred immediately after the Saviour's resurrection.

(*a*) "When the Sabbath was past" (that is to say after sunset on the Sabbath day), "Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought sweet spices, that coming, they might anoint Jesus." They had prepared them on the previous evening; but, obliged by the repose of the holy day to interrupt their preparations, they availed themselves, in order to complete their work, of the first moment when it was permitted them so to do. It was necessary, however, before they set out on their journey, to tarry until the night was past; but yet they did not wait for the clear light of day. (*b*) "The first day of the week, when it was yet dark, they came very early in the morning, bringing the spices which they had prepared, to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen." They were not aware that the Jews had set guards there: wherefore, fancying that they had no other obstacle to meet, "they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre? For it was very great." They were thus expressing their embarrassment, when the Lord removed in a moment every obstacle. (*c*) "Behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow. For fear of him, the guards were struck with terror and became as dead men." But they speedily recovered the use of their senses, and fled with all haste. Meantime, (*d*) "the women came and found the stone rolled back from the sepulchre." The angel—the sight of whom would have terrified them—being not yet visible to their eyes, nothing appeared any longer to hinder the execution of their pious designs. But, "going in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus (1)."

(*a*) St. Matt., xxviii. 1; St. Mark, xvi. 1.
(*b*) St. Mark, xvi. 2; St. John, xx. 1; St. Luke, xxiv. 1.
(*c*) St. Matthew, xxviii. 2–4.
(*d*) St. Luke, xxiv. 2, 3.

(1) The visit of Magdalen and the holy women to the sepulchre, and the coming of the two disciples; the apparitions of the angels, and that of Jesus Christ, as well to Magdalen as to the holy women, are positive facts, since they are reported by the sacred writers; but it is extremely difficult to arrange them all in order, and we think we may say, that not one of all the systems imagined by the interpreters is free from some objection. Neither can we assert that that which we have followed is preferable to others: it is arbitrary like all the others, but it was necessary for us to adopt some system.

We may infer that they then withdrew, and it is not unlikely that, supposing the body to have been removed to some neighboring place, they may have dispersed in order to seek it. Magdalen, more impatient than the others, proceeded immediately in quest of those whom she imagined could give her information concerning it. (*a*) "She ran, therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith to them: They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter, therefore, went out, and that other disciple, and they came to the sepulchre (2). They both did run together, and that other disciple out-ran Peter, and came first to the sepulchre, and when he stooped down, he saw the linen cloths lying; but yet he went not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, that had been about his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but apart wrapped up into one place. Then that other disciple also went in, who came first to the sepulchre; and he saw and believed; for as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead (3). So the disciples went away again to their home. Peter," who was not yet thoroughly persuaded, "went away, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass."

(*a*) St. John, xx. 2–10; St. Luke, xxiv. 12.

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(2) Peter demeans himself as if he had not sinned: he does so because he is penitent, and that he knows his Master's goodness too well to doubt that the penitent sinner holds the same place in his heart as if he had never sinned. Experience fully proved that he was not mistaken in this. He was the first of the apostles to whom Jesus Christ appeared, and his emotions of joy and grief on seeing this prodigy of mercy are difficult to be imagined, and impossible to be described.

(3) This expression, *as yet they knew not the Scripture*, refers to the two disciples, but with some difference. With regard to St. Peter, who did not as yet believe, it signifies that because he did not understand what was written concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he returned thence without believing it. With regard to St. John who then commenced to believe, this expression means—that inasmuch as he did not comprehend what was written of the resurrection, he then believed it only because he found the tomb open, the linen without the body, and the shroud folded back. Now, if he had understood what is written, he would have believed in the resurrection because it was foretold, and solely on the testimony of God, which would have produced a much more perfect faith. For believing solely on account of the inferences drawn from what he saw, was believing merely on the testimony of reason, which gave him no other advantage over St. Peter than that of having a clearer and more penetrating mind.

Magdalen, detained by her love, could not bring herself to follow them, "but stood without at the sepulchre, weeping. Now as she was weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and she saw two angels in white, sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid. They say to her: Woman, why weepest thou? She saith to them: Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. When she had said these words she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and she knew not that it was Jesus (4). He saith to her: Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, thinking that it was the gardener, saith to him: Sir, if thou hast taken him away, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith to her: Mary. She turning, saith to him: Rabboni, that is to say, Master." She instantly cast herself at his feet, for the purpose of embracing them; but the sojourn which he was to make on earth would give her time and opportunity enough for this, and he had other matters to think of at that moment. For this reason "Jesus saith to her: Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father (5), but go to my brethren (6), and say to them: I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God (7)."

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(4) Perhaps because she had not looked at his countenance, prepossessed as she was with the idea that he could only be the gardener. It might be—and this is the common opinion—that she saw a face different from that of the Saviour, not from any real change which had occurred in the features of his countenance, but because the image which was before Magdalen's eyes did not represent him such as he was.

(5) This passage has always been regarded as extremely difficult. The explanation thereof which is inserted in the text appeared the most natural and satisfactory.

(6) He calls them his brethren, in order to dissipate any apprehension they might have that their flight, at the time of his passion, had diminished his affection for them. St. Paul insinuates another reason, viz.: it was to the end that they might know that, far from disowning them when he had attained the glorified state which followed his resurrection, they were only the dearer and more closely united to him on that account.

(7) He commissions her to announce not only his resurrection to his disciples, but he wishes her to inform them further, that he has arisen to die no more; that he has only a very short time to remain on earth; that, if he quits them in order to return to God, he does not leave them forever, since by styling them his brethren, and designating as their God and their Father him whom he calls his Father and his God, he gives them to understand that he merely goes before them into the paternal mansion where they shall one day find themselves reunited to him.

(*a*) "[*Thus*] Jesus rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils." He wished, by this distinction, to recompense the fervor and the constancy of her love. The zeal of the other women had also its reward. Having returned to the sepulchre (for we are to suppose that they went there twice), and not finding him whom they so eagerly sought, (*b*) "as they were astonished in their minds at this, behold two men stood by them in shining apparel. And as they were afraid, and bowed down their countenance towards the ground, the angel, answering, said to the women: Fear not you (8); for I know that you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, for he is risen, as is said. Remember how he spoke unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. Come and see the place where the Lord was laid. Go quickly, tell ye his disciples and Peter that he is risen (9). Behold, he will go before you into Galilee. There you shall see him (10), as he told you. Lo, I have foretold it to you. They [*then*] remembered his [*Jesus'*] words."

(*c*) "They went out quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, running to tell his disciples. They said nothing," on the way, "to any man; for they were afraid." But their fear was quickly dispelled, and their joy raised to its highest pitch. Whilst

(*a*) St. Mark, xvi. 9.
(*b*) St. Luke, xxiv. 4–8; St. Matthew, xxviii. 5–7; St. Mark, xvi. 7.
(*c*) St. Matthew, xxviii. 8; St. Mark, xvi. 8.

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(8) *Fear not you* is said to them in opposition to the soldiers. Very far from encouraging the latter, the angel wished to terrify them; very far from wishing to alarm the holy women, he restores their confidence.

In visions which come from God, a person is at first surprised and frightened; but confidence is very soon restored.

Those visions which commence by confidence and end in trouble, are justly suspected to come from the Evil Spirit.

(9) Peter alone is distinguished from the others.

(10) In Galilee, although they should see him previously at Jerusalem. But Galilee was the place where he should appear oftenest to them, remain the longest time with them, and exhibit himself to a greater number.

they were hurrying on as we have just stated, (*a*) "behold Jesus met them, saying: All hail. They came up, and took hold of his feet, and adored him. Then Jesus said to them: Fear not. Go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee; there they shall see me. Going back from the sepulchre, they told all these things to the eleven and to the rest. It was Joanna, and Mary of James, and the other women that were with them, who told these things to the apostles; [*but*] these words seemed to them as idle tales, and they did not believe them. Mary Magdalen" had no greater success, when she "cometh and telleth the disciples: I have seen the Lord, and these things he said to me. They hearing that he was alive and had been seen by her, did not believe."

Not so with the principal authors of his death. They believed his resurrection; but these hardened men only sought to conceal the proof thereof, and to prevent others, as far as they possibly could, from believing, as they were themselves forced to do. God, who wished to convince them, because he wished to save them, sent them witnesses who could not be suspected by them. (*b*) "When the women were departed, behold some of the guards came into the city, and told the chief priests all things that had been done."

It seems, from what has been hitherto said, that they could only have remarked the earthquake, the removal of the stone, and the apparition of the angel. Whether they had concluded that Jesus Christ had indeed risen, as it is natural that they should believe, or whether they had otherwise had direct and positive proof of the fact, which may indeed have been the case, although the fact be not written, it is certain that they were persuaded of it, and that they also succeeded in convincing those very men whose interest it was not to believe it. For, after they had made their report, the chief priests, "being assembled together with the ancients, taking counsel" upon the course that should be adopted, "gave a great sum of money to the soldiers (11), saying: Say you, His disciples came by

(*a*) St. Matt., xxviii. 9; St. Luke, xxiv. 9–11; St. John, xx. 18; St. Mark, xvi. 11.
(*b*) St. Matthew, xxviii. 11–15.

(11) Why did they not bring them up for punishment as accomplices of the abduction? This is the way in which Herod treated St. Peter's guards; and this step, which

night, and stole him away when we were asleep. And if the governor shall hear this, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they, taking the money, did as they were taught; and this word was spread abroad among the Jews even unto this day."

The imposition was so visible, that at first sight we would suppose no one could be deceived by it. For it is exceedingly improbable that several sentinels on guard should all fall asleep at the same time; but it is utterly impossible that such a theft as this could be carried into execution without disturbing them. It was necessary to displace and roll away a stone of enormous size, to penetrate into the sepulchre, and take the body thence;—it was necessary, I say, that all this should be done groping in the dark, since it must have occurred, if at all, during the night; and also that several men should have a hand in the transaction, for it is evident that a single man could not suffice. If it be insisted that such an enterprise, so subject to mistakes and accidents, might have succeeded in the midst of guards, without a single one of them being awakened, we must then say that these guards were not asleep, but enchanted. This reasoning is so simple, that there can be no doubt but it occurred to many of the Jews, and that, notwithstanding the authority of their chief men, they knew well what to believe. However, these leaders were not unskilful in disseminating through the public a report devoid of all probability. In order to discover its absurdity it was necessary to reflect a little, and they knew that the multitude never reflect.

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would have cost nothing, was the best adapted to have an imposing effect on the public. They would have undoubtedly done so if they had had the absolute power which Herod had over his subjects and his soldiers. But, not having this right, they were constrained to denounce them to Pilate, who would probably not have condemned them without giving them a hearing; and in that case the truth must have come to light. The plan which they adopted was unavailing, but it was the only one they could safely take.

CHAPTER LXX.

DIVERS APPARITIONS TO PETER, TO JAMES, TO THE TWO DISCIPLES AT EMMAUS, AND TO THE ELEVEN (FIRST AND SECOND.)

It was by withdrawing his body from the hands of the Jews that Jesus Christ proved to them his resurrection, and this proof was to them unanswerable. For, since they had remained masters of it, it became necessary, either that they should have it to show after the third day, or otherwise to confess that he was resuscitated; nor did they escape from this dilemma by bringing forward witnesses who said they had been asleep while he was carried off. It would have been necessary to attest this abduction by a judicial investigation, and to punish the perpetrators and accomplices thereof. But they could not even attempt this, because such a proceeding could only result in the disgrace of those who might undertake it. The Saviour acted differently with regard to his disciples. He fully convinced them of his resurrection by showing himself to them, and by delivering himself, as it were, into their hands, since he permitted them to touch his sacred members. The infidelity of the first was inexcusable, and the second were forced to be faithful. It is not for us to inquire the reason of these different modes of treatment. To return to the disciples, he only led them back gradually from their original state of incredulity, to that immovable faith which they subsequently communicated to the entire world, and which they finally sealed with their blood. The first proof which he gave to them was the report of the holy women, and the sight of the open tomb, with the circumstance of the linen left there, and the folded shroud; which destroyed all notion of a furtive carrying off. Then he appeared to some individuals in particular—afterwards to the entire eleven: and it was then that he permitted them to touch him, and that he ate with them; lastly (*a*) "was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once." Of these several apparitions, some are merely glanced at by the sacred writers, others are given in

(*a*) 1 Corinthians, xv. 6.

detail. We proceed to relate them as they do, commencing with the private apparitions.

The first was to Simon Peter.* We know that this occurred on the very Sunday of the resurrection; but we are ignorant of the moment, the place, and the circumstances. His penance had effaced his crime; and very far from being rejected, he was none the less favored, since he was the first of the apostles to whom the Lord appeared. God forgives as God—that is to say, he pardons perfectly. He loves, and he caresses the penitent sinner, as if he had received no offence from him. We do not lose the whole fruit of this apparition, the details of which are unknown to us, whilst we gather from it so consoling a truth.

There was also a private apparition to James† the Less, he who is called the brother of the Lord, of whom he was a near relative according to the flesh. There is reason to believe that this did not take place until several days after the resurrection, and that when the Lord conferred this favor upon James, the latter no longer doubted that he had risen from the dead, since he must have seen him more than once in company with the other apostles.

That which follows was accompanied by very remarkable circumstances. (*a*) "That same day" of the resurrection, towards evening, "two disciples went to a town which was sixty furlongs (1) from Jerusalem, named Emmaus, and they talked together of all these things which had happened. While they talked and reasoned with one another, Jesus himself also drew near and went with them. But their eyes were held (2), that they should not know him. He

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiv. 13–32.

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* The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.—Luke, xxiv. 34.

† After that, he was seen by James.—1 Cor. xv. 7.

(1) About two leagues.

(2) St. Mark says: *He appeared in another shape to two of them walking, as they were going into the country.* This may have occurred in two different ways—either by the actual changing of the features of his countenance, or because an image different from his was represented to the eyes of the two disciples. The second is in itself the most probable, as we have already said, when speaking of the apparition seen by Magdalen, and although the text of St. Mark may appear to insinuate the first, we should explain it by St. Luke, who, after having at first said, *their eyes were held* that they should not

said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad? The one of them, whose name was Cleophas (3), answering, said to him: Art thou only a stranger

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know him, concludes by further stating: *their eyes* were opened, and they knew him. Whence we see that he places in *their eyes* the whole cause of the mistake.

St. Thomas places it in the powers of the soul. In order to recognize a person, it is not enough to see his countenance, we must recollect that we have previously seen him. Recollection is an operation of the soul, which Jesus Christ may have suspended in the two disciples. Thus, although they saw him as he actually was, still they could not recognize him, because the divine power hindered them from remembering that it was he. It is very likely that this was the real state of the case; but it strikes us that then St. Luke would have said that their *minds were held*, and not *that their eyes were held* that they should not know him.

The question is still to be viewed in another and more delicate sense, viz.: whether Jesus, in appearing to his disciples under another form than his own, did not practice deceit—for there is deceit in actions as well as in words. This was the idea of the Priscillianists, and their error was noted and refuted by St. Augustine. We are bound to believe that Jesus practised no deceit on this occasion; but it is easier to assert this than to explain it. We shall, however, do our best to make it clear. In an action of this kind, we have to consider the intention and the end proposed. Here we find that the intention was not to deceive, while the end in view was that of undeceiving. If Jesus Christ had taken the form of a pilgrim for the purpose of concealing his own identity, then his act would have been one of deceit and imposture. But, so far from that, we know that his design was to convince them that he had indeed arisen, and that it was he and no other who then spoke to them, of which they were at length persuaded. So that whatever he had previously said and done tended solely to this knowledge and conviction. He did not, therefore, lead them into error; but he left them, at first, in their ignorance, and that only that he might afterwards enlighten them in a way more suitable to their dispositions, and more salutary for those whom they were, in their turn, to instruct. This whole affair has a close resemblance to a parable or allegory, wherein he who proposes either, commences by stating things which are false in themselves, and, therefore, calculated to mislead if taken in their natural signification. But await the conclusion, and you will discover that you have been taught a valuable truth, and that that which seemed, at first, false or merely fictitious, was advanced solely for the purpose of making the truth more manifest and more easily understood.

(3) We are ignorant as to who this other disciple was. We know that he was not an apostle, since it is stated that when these had returned to Jerusalem, they found there the *eleven* apostles *gathered together*, with the exception of St. Thomas. Many think that it was St. Luke, who suppressed his own name out of humility. They are, however, refuted by St. Luke himself, who declares, at the commencement of his Gospel, that he was informed of the facts which he is going to narrate from those who were eye-witnesses thereof. If he had been amongst the number of these witnesses, he would at least have said that he was going to relate what he had partly seen himself, and partly learned from those who had seen them.

in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days? He said to them: What things? And they said: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in work and word, before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he who should have redeemed Israel; and now besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company, affrighted us; who, before it was light were at the sepulchre, and not finding his body, came, saying: That they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but him they found not. Then Jesus said to them: O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things that were concerning him.

"They drew nigh to the town whither they were going; and he made as though he would go further (4). But they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. He went in with them; and whilst he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them (5). And their eyes were opened, and they knew him;

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(4) *He made as though he would go further.* The meaning of this is, that he was more willing to remain, provided they urged him to do so, as they did in point of fact. But he, in another sense, did not merely make show of an intention to proceed further: he had resolved to do so, supposing that they did not invite him to remain. He wished that the happiness of recognizing him should be the reward of hospitality exercised towards a stranger. This gives ground for thinking that at least one of the two disciples was from the village (bourg) of Emmaus, and that he had his house there. St. Jerome says that this was Cleophas, and he adds, that by celebrating the Eucharist in his house, Jesus Christ constituted it a church. It is doubtful whether this Cleophas is he whose wife or daughter was one of the Marys.

(5) He takes bread, he blesses it, he breaks it, he distributes it; this was all that he did when, at the Last Supper, he changed the bread into his body. This assemblage of similar circumstances has caused the inference that he also consecrated this, and made it Eucharistic bread. The miraculous effect which it produced upon the two disciples, goes to strengthen this opinion; indeed it is that of St. Jerome, of St. Augustine, of Theophy-

and he vanished out of their sight;" leaving on their minds the full and entire conviction that it was he, and that he was truly resuscitated. Whereupon, "they said one to another: Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the Scriptures?"

This sacred fire seeks only to diffuse itself. Thus, (*a*) "they rose up the same hour and went back to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven gathered together, and those that were with them, saying: The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way; and how they knew him in the breaking of bread: neither did they believe them;" which must be understood with reference to some amongst them, who had not even believed the testimony of the chief of the apostles.

Truth triumphed, at length, over incredulity, and obstinacy was obliged to yield to evidence. (*b*) "Whilst they were speaking these things, when it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut (6), where the disciples were gathered together,

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiv. 33–35; St. Mark, xvi. 13.
(*b*) St. Luke, xxiv. 36–40; St. John, xx. 19, 20; St. Mark, xvi. 14.

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lactus, &c. Protestants think the contrary, and they do so consistently with their principles; for it would evidently follow that Jesus Christ himself gave communion under the one kind of bread alone. But they must own, at least, that St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and the other ancient writers, who thought that the bread had been consecrated, have, consequently, thought that Jesus Christ himself gave communion under the one kind.

(6) Jesus Christ entered, the doors being and remaining shut, even as he had come forth from his mother's womb and from the sepulchre before the stone was removed, without hurt or fracture. The matter was so understood by the entire world until the time of Calvin, who without any discussion as to the manner in which Jesus Christ had entered, flatly pronounced it impossible, and not to be believed, that he entered whilst the doors were and remained shut. Penetration of bodies, the possibility of which carries with it that of the real presence, was a consequence flowing too manifestly from this fact. It was therefore necessary for him to abandon the ancient explanation, which did not agree with the new error. However, an effort was made to assign another reason for it. Jesus Christ, it was said, proved much better that he was not a pure spirit by entering through the open door, than if the door had remained closed, just as if the solidity of his body was not still better proved by the touching of his hands, his feet, and his side, which he vouchsafed to the disciples. But he had, besides, to make them acquainted with the prerogatives of glorified bodies, and he did this when he entered whilst the doors remained shut.

for fear of the Jews, Jesus appeared to the eleven as they were at table, and saith to them: Peace be to you. It is I, fear not. He upbraided them with their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen him, after he was risen again. But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit; and he saith to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet; it is I, myself. Handle, and see. For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet, and his side (7)."

(*a*) "The disciples, therefore, were glad, when they saw the Lord. But while they yet believed not (8), and wondered for joy, he said: Have you here any thing to eat? They offered him a piece of broiled fish and a honey-comb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the remains, he gave to them."

(*b*) "He said to them again: Peace be to you." And as he was going to confer upon them a great gift, and to communicate to them the most incommunicable of all the prerogatives of the divinity, he added: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them (9), and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they

(*a*) St. John, xx. 20; St. Luke, xxiv. 41–43. (*b*) St. John, xx. 21–31.

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(7) It is not stated whether or not they really touched him. The ancients had so little doubt upon the subject, that they never even mooted the question; in point of fact, every thing tends to this belief. They wished to assure themselves of the truth of the resurrection: the touch was the true means of doing so, and Jesus Christ offered them this means. When St. Thomas said to them: *Except I shall put my finger in the place of the nails.... I will not believe,* does he not seem to have meant: I shall believe it like you when I shall have touched him like you? The following words from the First Epistle of St. John, are also understood to refer to this touch: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, *and our hands have handled,* of the Word of life.... We declare unto you.

(8) They must have believed to a certain extent, since they were *filled with joy;* but this belief was not exempt from doubt. This is the reason why it is said that they did not yet believe, because they had not faith, which is incompatible with doubt. They were delighted at seeing him, but they doubted whether it was not an illusion or a dream.

(9) This breath was not the Holy Ghost; it was but the sign thereof.

By this breath going forth from his bosom, Jesus Christ further signified that the Holy Ghost proceeds from him according to his divinity.

are forgiven them (10); and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained (11)." This sacred breath was the sensible sign of what was wrought invisibly in them, and justified by anticipation the mysterious ceremonies which his Church should employ in the administration of Sacraments.

However, there remained one unbeliever to be convinced: "Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples, therefore, said to him: We have seen the Lord. But he said to them: Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

This was laying down the law, as it were, for his master, and no one was less worthy of such a favor than he who ventured to exact it. But this amiable master would only listen to his own goodness, and thereby show us the full extent of his adorable condescension. "After eight days again, his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said: Peace be to you. Then he saith to Thomas: Put in thy finger hither, and see my hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said to him:" Thou art "My Lord and my God (12).

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(10) The remission of sins is attributed to the Holy Ghost, as well as all the other effects of the divine goodness, because the Holy Ghost is the production of the will of the Father and of the Son, and that the object of the will is all good. The Holy Ghost is only given to the apostles, here, with reference to the remission of sins. Thus the gift which is made to them on this day has no interference with the gifts of understanding and of fortitude, and all the miraculous gifts which are promised to them, and which they shall receive upon the day of Pentecost.

(11) Since the power of retaining sins is joined to that of remitting them, those who are constituted the judges thereof, discriminate between those sins which should be remitted, and those which should be retained. This discrimination cannot be made without knowledge, and knowledge can only be obtained by confession; therefore confession is not only a matter of precept, but also of divine institution.

(12) These words, *thou art*, are not in the text. However, these words of St. Thomas have always been regarded as a confession of faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ. The enemies of this fundamental dogma have pretended that this was only a cry of surprise and admiration. This explanation has been condemned by the second Council of Constantinople. That explanation which we follow, in accordance with all tradition, is conveyed more impressively in the Greek and Latin languages, than in either the French or ours.

Jesus saith to him: Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed (13)."

If after that there still remained some unbelievers amongst the disciples, there were, at least, none such amongst the apostles. God had permitted their incredulity, because it was to be auxiliary to the faith of all ages. We have seen that they left no difficulty unexamined, nor proofs to be desired; they exhausted them all, and the cause of incredulity could never have been confided to less credulous men. How then can we still doubt the testimony which they have rendered regarding the resurrection of Christ, since they truly saw him with their own eyes, and touched him with their own hands?

"Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and, that believing, you may have life in his name."

CHAPTER LXXI.

APPARITION BY THE SEA-SIDE.—MIRACULOUS FISHING.—PETER APPOINTED PASTOR OF THE WHOLE FLOCK.—APPARITION UPON A MOUNTAIN OF GALILEE.—MISSION OF THE APOSTLES.—FINAL APPARITION AT JERUSALEM.—PROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST.—ASCENSION.—CONCLUSION.

WHAT we are going to relate is not for the purpose of adducing evidence with regard to that which is already sufficiently proved.

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(13) Because it is not necessary to have seen in order to have faith, which is, according to St. Paul's definition, *the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.*—Heb. xi. Thus, St. Thomas, who saw and who touched Jesus Christ, when resuscitated, had not, properly speaking, that faith in the resurrection which we have without having seen. Wherefore it is that Jesus Christ declares us happier than Thomas, and even than the other apostles, who believed in the Saviour's resurrection solely on the testimony of their eyes and their hands. Yet Thomas made a very commendable act of faith in confessing his master's divinity, although he did not see it, and that it was only by the revelation of the Heavenly Father that he could, like St. Peter, know and believe it.

Its only object is to furnish those particular instructions which a pious and attentive reader may easily gather. (*a*) "After this, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. And he showed himself after this manner. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas who is called Didymus, and Nathanael who was of Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter saith to them: I go a fishing. They say to him: We also come with thee. And they went forth, and entered into the ship; and that night they caught nothing (1). But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus therefore said to them: Children, have you any meat? They answered him: No. He saith to them: Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find. They cast, therefore; and now they were not able to draw it, for the multitude of fishes. That disciple, therefore, whom Jesus loved, said to Peter: It is the Lord. Simon Peter, when he heard that it was the Lord, girt his coat about him (for he was naked), and cast himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the ship (for they were not far from the land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes.

"As soon then as they came to land, they saw hot coals lying, and a fish laid thereon, and bread (2). Jesus saith to them: Bring hither of the fishes which you have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, one hundred and fifty-three. And although there were so many, the net was not

(*a*) St. John, xxi. 1–24.

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(1) The labor of a whole night had produced nothing for the disciples; one word from the Saviour filled their nets in a moment. But the Saviour does not say this word until they had toiled all the night long. In vain does man make efforts—success can come from God alone; but God grants success to those only who do their best. To toil, as if success depended upon our efforts alone, and still to expect success but from God alone, is the course which both reason and religion prescribe, and it equally avoids the two baneful extremes of presumption and indolence.

(2) They had toiled all the night; they were hungry—they had no fire, and apparently they were in want of bread. Much time would be requisite in order to procure it. Jesus Christ works a new miracle, in order that they may instantly find every thing that was necessary for them. God thinks of all; he can do all, and he will for those who place their confidence in him.

broken. Jesus saith to them: Come, and dine. And none of them who were at meat durst ask him: Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord (3). And Jesus cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish in like manner. This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to his disciples, after he was risen from the dead (4)."

Simon Peter had taken a greater part than the others in this miraculous fishing, of which he was, as it were, the leader; but he knew not yet all the share which he was to have in carrying out his master's designs: in this he was to be the principal actor. His three denials were then to be atoned for by three protestations of love; in consequence of which he was to be confirmed in his office of shepherd of Christ's flock. To complete the favor, he was to receive an assurance that he should one day die for him whom he had denied, and efface the shame of his weakness by the glory of a generous martyrdom. "When therefore they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because Jesus had said to him the third time: Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus said to him: Feed my sheep (5)."

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(3) If he was to be recognized at sight, it seems that the expression should have been: *Seeing* that it was the Lord. He, therefore, appeared to them under another figure, in the way that has been already explained, and they did not *see* that it was he, but they *knew* it, because his miracles revealed him, and he himself had impressed their minds with the certainty that it was he.

(4) The Evangelist does not allude to the private apparitions, but only to those wherein Jesus showed himself, at one and the same time, to a considerable number of disciples. This was the third apparition of this sort.

(5) We have the explanation of this expression in these words of St. Bernard to Pope Eugenius (Book III. Of the Consideration, chap. viii.): "Who art thou? said the holy Doctor to him. Thou art the High Priest, the Sovereign Pontiff. Thou art he to whom the keys have been given—to whom the sheep have been confided. I agree that there are other porters of heaven, and other pastors of the flock; but, in you, these two

That which grieved him most was the apprehension lest his master should mistrust, not the sincerity, but the constancy, of his love, supposing that he were put to some proof similar to that in which he had so signally failed. Jesus reassures him, by promising him, with an oath,* that he shall thenceforward be generous and faithful. He added, therefore: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not. And this he said, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had said this, he saith to him: Follow me."

This figurative language was understood by him to whom it was addressed, and it excited in him a curiosity which the Lord did not then think proper to satisfy. "Peter turning about, saw that disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also leaned on his breast at supper, and said: Lord, who is he that shall betray thee? Him therefore when Peter had seen, he saith to Jesus: Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith to him: So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? Follow thou me. This saying therefore went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. And Jesus did not say to him: He should not die; but, So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee (6)?

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* "*Avec serment.*"

denominations are more glorious, inasmuch as their signification is of higher excellence when applied to you. The other pastors have their flocks apart, and each has his own. All the flocks have been confided to you. They are, in reference to you, but one flock under one pastor; you are not only pastor of the sheep, you are also the pastor of all the pastors. You ask me, how I prove this? By the Lord's own words. For to whom, I do not say of the bishops, but even of the apostles, have all the sheep been confided, in a manner as absolute and as universal as this: Peter, if thou lovest me, feed my sheep? And to what sheep does he allude? Is it of a particular people, of a city, of a country, of a kingdom? No, he simply says, *my sheep*. Who sees not that he does not merely designate some of them, but all taken together?"

Since Jesus Christ has said indefinitely to Peter: Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, we may conclude, that whoever does not recognize Peter for his pastor is neither of the lambs nor of the sheep.

(6) When the disciples thus explained the Saviour's words, he desisted from speaking, and we may say that the sound of his voice still rang in their ears. Can it be that they had so little memory, as to imagine that he had just said these very words: *He dieth*

This is that disciple who giveth testimony of these things, and hath written these things; and we know that his testimony is true."

In the mean time, (*a*) "the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And seeing him they adored; but some doubted," which we can scarcely think was the case with the apostles. This is the reason why many have thought that there were a vast number of disciples then with them, and that the apparition, which had been most distinctly announced, and which was to have been the most solemn, was that where the five hundred brethren whom St. Paul speaks of were all gathered together. "Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying" these words, which might also be addressed, in proportion, to the second order of disciples: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth (7). Going

(*a*) St. Matthew, xxviii. 16–20; St. Mark, xvi. 15–18.

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not? No; but they alleged that what Jesus had said signified that he, of whom he spoke, should not die. Now, if this was, in point of fact, the meaning of his discourse, they had, therefore, understood him correctly. Therefore, what is the cause of this resumption of St. John: *And Jesus did not say to him, He dieth not?* Were not the disciples entitled to reply to him: We know well that he did not say expressly so—we only think that what he did say signifies as much. What can you find wrong in this?

If the Saviour's words did signify, He shall not die, does it not also seem that St. John sought to convey a different impression to his readers, by affecting to draw off their minds from the true sense of the Saviour's words?

We venture to conclude, from these reflections, that, if Jesus did not wish to say that St. John should not die, what the Evangelist here adds is very rational; but that it would be by no means rational, if Jesus really meant that St. John should not die.

And since this is the passage of his Gospel which has given rise to the opinion that he is not dead, we may conclude that this opinion is destitute of any foundation.

The most ancient and the best-informed authors appear to entertain no doubt of St. John's death. They speak of his tomb as being well known over the whole earth. It is true, that there is no information as to what became of his body, which has made several think that Jesus Christ had resuscitated him, and that he had transported him to heaven in body and soul without awaiting the general resurrection. He was the well-beloved disciple—the virgin apostle; he had reposed upon the breast of the Lord, who also gave him to Mary as a son; and we may add that St. John was, after Jesus Christ, the consolation and delight of that holy mother. To many it has seemed natural to think that he had been associated in the same privilege. This is only a pious opinion; but, far from trying to combat it, we ought rather to desire that it be true.

(7) Omnipotence has been given to Jesus Christ in many different ways:—The Word has received it from the Father with the divine nature, which the Father communicates to him whole and entire. The man in Jesus Christ possesses it by virtue of the hypo-

therefore (8), teach ye all nations (9); baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature (10). He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved (11); but he that believeth not, shall be condemned. These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover."

It would be extremely difficult to point out precisely on which of these occasions Jesus said to his disciples the following words. We only know that it was at Jerusalem, after they had returned from

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static union. Jesus Christ has acquired it by his sufferings and by his death. So that the sovereignty of the universe, which belongs to the Son of God, by the eternal generation—to the Son of man, by the incarnation—belongs, also, to the Man-God, by right of conquest. It is thought that he here speaks of it in this latter sense, because he appears to speak of it as of a new thing.

(8) *All power is given to me. . . . Going, therefore.* It is as if he said: The enterprise which I confide to you is far beyond your strength; but go fearlessly, it is the Almighty who sends you.

(9) Teach the mysteries of faith—administer the sacraments—explain the precepts of evangelical morality, is, in three words, what Jesus Christ deputes those to perform whom he establishes the pastors of his church, a commission which they hold from no other power, and which no other power has a right to take from them.

This power comes to them from heaven. Hell cannot divest them of it, nor can earth appropriate it to itself.

The Church was not the less in possession of it under Dioclesian, nor more under Constantine; whether persecuted or protected, it is always the same.

(10) *Every creature* signifies all men, as the whole world signifies all the earth. We see how different is this mission from that which Jesus Christ gave to the apostles before his Passion. In the first, he had prohibited them from preaching to the Samaritans and the Gentiles; in the latter he sends them to preach to every creature. The wall of separation is destroyed, and all nations are henceforward to constitute but one people.

(11) He shall be saved, provided that he does not contradict his faith by his works, and that he does not belie the promises of his baptism. We find in Scripture many general propositions similar to this, which have annexed to them an implied condition: *Every one that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved* (Joel, ii.); *Every one that asketh receiveth* (Matthew, vii.). As to what regards, in particular, those propositions, wherein salvation is attributed to faith without any allusion being made to works, or to works without any mention of faith, see note 4, page 56, Part I.

Galilee, in pursuance of the order which he had given them. He then said to them: (*a*) "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and he said to them: Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day; and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations (12), beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things, and," in order that you may be capable of giving and maintaining such great testimony, "I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay you in the city, till you be endued with power from on high."

Thus it was that (*b*) "Jesus showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And eating with them, he commanded them, that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard (saith he) by my mouth. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

(*c*) "They, therefore, who were come together," still taken up with the idea of the Messiah's temporal reign, "asked him, saying: Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" The Holy Ghost was soon to free them entirely from this notion; wherefore, without pausing to contradict it, the Lord merely answered: "It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiv. 44–49.
(*b*) Acts, i. 3–5.
(*c*) Acts, i. 6–11; St. Luke, xxiv. 50, 51; St. Mark, xvi. 19.

(12) This was the most interesting news which could be brought to mankind. Responsible to God's justice for an infinite debt, men were incapable of discharging it, and their reprobation was inevitable. It is announced to them that a Saviour has appeared, who has paid the debt for them, and that, by penance, each of them can avail himself of so great a privilege. The penance which is here spoken of is properly that which disposes for baptism, which penance consists in the detestation of the sins committed, joined to a sincere desire never to commit them again. There is no further reference to works in satisfaction for sin, because these works are only necessary for the expiation of sins committed after baptism.

his own power; but you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." When the Lord Jesus had said these things, "he led them out as far as Bethania, and lifting up his hands he blessed them; and it came to pass, whilst he blessed them, he departed from them. While they looked on he was raised up; a cloud received him out of their sight, [*and he*] was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God. While they were beholding him going up to heaven, behold two men stood by them in white garments, who said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as you have seen him going into heaven."

Thus the expectation of Jesus Christ has been the occupation and, if we may venture to say so, the religion of all ages. Promised immediately after the sin of the first man, he fixed the attention of all the just from the birth of time until that of his coming. Scarcely had he quitted the earth when two angels declared to his disciples that he should one day re-appear there. They then immediately dispersed themselves throughout all nations, to whom they announced not only that he had come, but also that he should come again. He shall come, said the prophets commissioned to foretell his first appearance. He is come, and he shall come, have the apostles said, they being, in their turn, prophets of his second coming. The period for the first was indicated, because it was not to have sufficient lustre to strike all eyes at once, and because, in order to be recognized, it was necessary that it should be looked for. The time of the second coming is not foretold, nor is it necessary that it should be, because Jesus Christ shall then exhibit himself in all the splendor of the divinity—as the sun, manifesting itself by its own light, does not require, in order to be perceived, that the observer should have notice of the moment when it is to appear on the horizon. Then shall be seen the accomplishment of those magnificent prophecies, which represent him so majestic and so terrible to behold; and all the oracles regarding the Messiah shall be found verified to the letter, (*a*) "what or in what manner of time the spirit of Christ in

(*a*) 1 Peter, i. 11.

them did signify, when it foretold those sufferings that are in Christ, and the glories that should follow." The first class of prophecies described a Saviour who only could become such by humiliation and by sorrow; the second class of prophecies announce a judge who shall show himself in all the lustre of divine power and majesty. Unhappy those who shall have disowned him in his humiliations! He who came in order to be their Saviour, shall appear to them no longer in any other quality than that of judge and avenger of their crimes. Happy those who shall have recognized, revered, imitated him in the humble and suffering state to which his love for men hath reduced him! In their judge they shall behold—a Saviour—who has promised to share his throne and his eternal bliss with those who shall have taken part in his humiliation and his sufferings.

END OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

FAMILY RECORD.

MARRIAGES.



FAMILY RECORD.

BIRTHS.

Thomas F. Dunn
Jan 29 1868.

John W. Dunn.
June 28. 1870.

James Kelly.
1874
Dec. 31. 1876.

Robert Kelly.
Jan 3. 1878.

Katherine Kelly.
Aug. 6 1880.

Robert Kelly
Sept 29. 1876

FAMILY RECORD.

DEATHS.

Thomas F. Dunn.
Jan. 4, 1866

John W. Dunn
May. 26. 1870.

Robert Kelly.
Mar. 1. 1877

Robert Malay
Sept 13 1881.

Thomas Walsh
Jan 9. 1882.

Thomas Murphy
Nov 18. 1883.

Joanna Mallay.
Nov 21. 1883.

Mary Walsh.
Feb. 9. 1883.

James Welsh
Sept 25. 1884

FAMILY RECORD.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES,

IN WHICH ARE RETAINED AND DISTINGUISHED

The Words of the Sacred Text according to the Vulgate.

WITH CONNECTIONS, EXPLANATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS.

A POSTHUMOUS WORK OF

FATHER FRANCIS DE LIGNY,
OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

BEING INTENDED AS A SEQUEL TO THE

LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

Mrs. J. Sadlier.

WITH THE APPROBATION OF THE MOST REV. JOHN HUGHES, D. D.,
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AND 179 NOTRE-DAME STREET, MONTREAL, C. E.

PREFACE.

THE life of Our Lord Jesus Christ on earth appeared so naturally to end with his ascension, that I had at first no intention of following it up by the Acts of the Apostles. Certain reflections which I have since made have, however, induced me to do so. The first and most conclusive is, that the Holy Ghost himself has appointed it so that this second historical portion of the New Testament comes immediately after the first, of which it is, indeed, the corroboration, nay, even the completion. Jesus Christ had made magnificent promises; he had announced sublime truths; and he had inculcated the most perfect system of morality. None of his words were to fall to the ground, but each and every one was to be literally fulfilled. It was, therefore, necessary that the event should justify the promise; that the mysteries of religion should be received by the Gentile nations; and that the laws of the Gospel, so far beyond the mere strength of man, should nevertheless find numerous and faithful observers. Then Jesus Christ spoke not in vain, and the divinity of his mission was demonstrated by its success. From the Book of the Acts we learn that Jesus Christ had no sooner quitted the earth than the Holy Ghost, so frequently and so solemnly promised, came down upon the disciples. Being instantly endowed with strength and courage from on high, these men, hitherto so timorous and fearful, stood forth at once and presented to the Jews, as their God, their Messiah, and their only hope for salvation, that Jesus who had been the object of their hatred, and the victim of their malice. The people were converted by thousands, and from their union with their chiefs springs the Christian Church, composed of pastors and hearers. The nations of the earth, being called to enter that fold, hastened to obey the summons; Peter receives the first-fruits, and Paul

gathers in the harvest; the wild olive is grafted on the true vine, Israel the common stem, and of both is formed that chosen people, the real Israel, or as it is called by the apostle, the *Israel of God* (Gal. vi. 16), the fulfilment of his promises, and the object of his tenderest affection.

Thus, notwithstanding the repugnance of nature and the prejudices of reason, the crucified Saviour is adored, and what is still more surprising, he is imitated. His morality, purer and more sublime than aught that human wisdom had ever imagined, and so fully exemplified by his own life, is announced, received, and practised. It is understood by every mind, and the passions are all obedient to its sway, so that a band of ordinary men, brought together as it were by chance, is suddenly transformed into a company of saints. The most distinguished philosophers had failed to reform even a single town, while this prodigious reformation, effected through the agency of a few poor fishermen, spreads abroad from its cradle in Jerusalem even to the uttermost ends of the earth, as though it were one vast arena. Nay, so rapid is its progress, that many of those who knew Jesus Christ in person, his contemporaries and his disciples, lived to see with their own eyes the fulfilment of that prophecy which they had heard from his own divine lips! *If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself* (St. John, xii. 32). He who sees not here the imprint of the finger of God is either mentally blind or wilfully incredulous. If there be any prodigy greater than that of the establishment of Christianity, it is assuredly the unbelief of those who hold out against the evidence of its proofs.

THE HISTORY

OF THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

CHAPTER I.

RETURN OF THE DISCIPLES FROM MOUNT OLIVET TO JERUSALEM.—THEY RETIRE TO AN UPPER ROOM.—SAINT PETER'S DISCOURSE FOLLOWED BY THE ELECTION OF SAINT MATTHIAS IN THE PLACE OF JUDAS.

Jesus had at length vanished from the eyes of his disciples, who, nevertheless, being confirmed in their faith by this new prodigy of the ascension, adored him (*a*) whom they no longer beheld. Their charity, more enlightened than of old it had been, forbade them to deplore a separation which must naturally have been so painful. They had at last fathomed the meaning of the words: "If ye loved me, ye would indeed be glad because I go to my Father" (*b*). When they could no longer see him with the eyes of the body, they began to consider him with those of the mind, seated on the throne of his divinity, established sole monarch of the universe (*c*), and preparing for them seats of glory by his side. "They went back," therefore, "with great joy to Jerusalem" (*d*); going forth "from the mountain named Olivet, which is no more than a Sabbath-day's journey" from the capital.

"And when they had entered in, they went up into an upper room, where there remained Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, Simon Zelotes, and Jude the brother of James. All these

(*a*) St. Luke, xxiv. 52.
(*b*) St. John, xiv. 28.
(*c*) St. Jude, 5.
(*d*) St. Luke, xxiv. 52.

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Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome. Jews also, and proselytes (1), Cretes and Arabians: we have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God (2). And they were all astonished, and wondered, saying one to another: What meaneth this? But others mocking, said: These men are full of new wine (3)."

They blasphemed that of which they knew nothing, which is generally the case with blasphemers; but on this occasion they were quickly confounded; for "Peter, standing up with the eleven (*a*),"

(*a*) Acts, ii. 14.

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on hearing the Apostles speak in their own tongue. It has been inferred from this passage that the language of the Galileans was different from that which was spoken in Judea; this inference is not correct. It is evident, from many texts of Scripture, that the Jews and the Galileans understood each other's language. When the servants of the high-priest said to St. Peter: *Thou too art a Galilean,* those words rather support our opinion than contradict it. Both parties spoke, and understood each other, and that which betrayed St. Peter was, not that he spoke a foreign tongue, but that he spoke in the accent of his country, just as Frenchmen quickly recognize a Gascon by his accent. What was it then that excited the surprise of the Jews of Judea? It was this: one of these Jews who understood what the apostle said, happened to stand beside a Greek or a Roman who understood him just as well, and hence the astonishment of the Jews. "For," said they, "if he spoke Greek or Latin how could I understand him, since I know nothing of those languages? so, when he speaks in my tongue, how is it that these strangers understand him?"

Through the gift of tongues which the apostles had received, 1st, They spoke the respective languages of all those whom they had to address; 2d. They understood each of those tongues when spoken to themselves; 3d. When they spoke at the same time to men of divers countries and of various tongues, they were understood by all the men at once, as proved by this discourse of St. Peter's. But how could that be so? God who operated the miracle alone knows. We can, nevertheless, comprehend this much—that every word spoken by the apostles on that occasion in any language whatsoever, was, by the power of God, so modulated on the air that it struck Grecian ears as the Greek word with the same meaning, while to the Roman ear it sounded as a Latin word, and so on with all the others.

(1) A Greek word, properly signifying a stranger, or one gathered in, or to speak still more accurately, a foreigner sojourning amongst a certain people. The term was applied by the Jews to those of the Gentiles who renounced paganism to embrace Judaism.

(2) When once the mind is full of the spirit of God, the tongue can speak of nothing *but* God. The carnal Jews regarded all this as the effects of drunkenness, and now-a-days lukewarm Christians esteem it as pure fanaticism.

(3) In this text, *they are full of new wine,* there is found the Greek word for *sweet wine,* which has here precisely the same signification. This phrase has excited some

and being the mouth-piece of them all, according to the Golden Mouth when commenting on this passage, "lifted up his voice and spoke to them: Ye men of Judea, and all you that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known to you," who are so amazed, "and with your ears receive my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day (1). But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days (2) (saith the Lord), I will pour out of my Spirit (3) upon all flesh (4): and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And upon my servants, indeed, and upon my handmaids will I pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy (5). And I will show wonders in the heaven above, and

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surprise, seeing that it was not then the season for new wine: consequently the word has been omitted in the greater number of translations. It should, however, be retained, because it is *in* the sacred text, and there is no need to suppress it. As new wine is always more effervescent, and affects the head more quickly, it has at all times been customary, when speaking of a man being intoxicated, to say: "He is drunk with new wine."

(1) Nine o'clock in the morning. We learn from the historian Josephus, that on festival days the Jews were in the habit of fasting till noon. It is not known that there was any law to that effect, the practice being simply one of devotion. Still the custom was so general, that to say it was but nine o'clock was at least a reasonable proof that they had not yet broken their fast.

(2) And those *last days* were then come, being the termination of the Hebrew dispensation, both civil and religious. From that day forward, the ancient law was no longer binding, and was barely tolerated till the fall of Jerusalem, when it was formally condemned, and ever after its observance became a crime.

(3) In Joel we read: "I will pour out *my Spirit*;" St. Peter said: "I will pour out *of* my Spirit," which would appear to signify less; yet these two expressions perfectly agree. The Spirit is entirely poured out, but it cannot be contained entire in vases so narrow as are the hearts of men; it fills them, and they infinitely overflow. Joel speaks of the quantity poured out, and St. Peter of what was received.

(4) This word chiefly signifies that the Spirit of the Lord was thenceforward poured out on all nations, without distinction of Jew or Gentile. It signifies also a more abundant effusion, as well in the measure of grace, as in the number of persons of every age, sex, and condition, to whom it shall communicate itself. Nothing was more common than this in the first age of the Church; and even now, though the prodigy be more rare and less perceptible, still we do occasionally find simple and illiterate persons speaking of heavenly things with the tongues of angels, whilst of other matters they know little or nothing.

(5) Without excluding prophecy, properly so called, which means the foretelling of

signs on the earth beneath; blood and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and manifest day (1) of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

On the foundation of this prophecy the apostle proceeds to establish the Gospel, and to point out to the people the Lord whom they must henceforward invoke, in order to obtain salvation: even Him whom they had crucified. By a prodigy of strength, far above his own natural weakness, he openly declares it to them; but, in order to secure to himself increased attention, he told them again, for the second time: "Ye men of Israel (*a*), hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you also know. This same being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (2), you, by the hands of wicked men,

(*a*) Acts, ii. 22.

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future events, *they shall prophesy* here signifies, in a general way, that they shall utter words which shall be suggested and dictated by the spirit of the Lord.

(1) In Latin, *manifestus*. The prophet Joel had said *horribilis*. It appears that the prophet and the apostle both referred to the last judgment, according to the common interpretation. St. Chrysostom understands it of the ruin of Jerusalem, to which he applies the above-mentioned prodigies, as metaphorical descriptions of that terrific destruction. We may unite these two interpretations, and from their union deduce the true reason why these fearful predictions came immediately after the descent of the Holy Ghost. The day on which that event took place may be considered as the last of the *old* law and the first of the *new*. But the abolition of the ancient law was to be speedily followed by the total ruin of the Jewish people; and the new dispensation shall only terminate with the world, whose end is to be characterized by fearful signs which are to precede and announce its coming. Hence the term of the duration of the two laws is here predicted, as also that the *second* shall be followed by no other.

(2) It was the will of God that Jesus Christ should suffer as he did. By his prescience he foresaw exactly what sufferings the Jews were to inflict upon him. He left them to do as their malice dictated, and hence the saying that he delivered Him to them. The will of God, which had put forth the decree, was just and holy; whereas the act of the Jews, who put it in execution, was unjust and detestable. God willed not that malice of theirs, but neither did he impede its course, because it served for the accomplishment of his designs. It follows that the same action may be justly decreed, and criminal in its execution: so that God is blameless and the Jews inexcusable. Those who do not acknowledge the infallibility of the divine prescience, are driven to assert that God urged

have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the sorrows of hell (1), as it was impossible that he should be holden by it. For David saith concerning him: I foresaw the Lord before my face, because he is at my right hand, that I may not be moved. For this my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover, my flesh also shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy Holy One (2) to see corruption.

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the Jews to act as they did, in order to secure the execution of his decrees, thereby representing God as both ignorant and wicked. Those persons who, when evil befalls them, refer it not to the will of God, but only to the malice of those who inflicted the injury, they are indeed blindly ignorant, knowing not that God has ordained that they should thus suffer; they are wicked, when, in violation of the commandment of God, they hate the man who has done them the injury.

The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, said Job, although it was Satan who had done him all the harm.

(1) In the Greek text it is: the sorrows *of death*. We may observe that in the language of Scripture, *infernus* frequently signifies the grave. Hence, many commentators have explained it as *death and the grave*. With regard to what is said of the *sorrows* of death, they have understood it of the sufferings, both of mind and body, which Jesus endured till his very last moment, but which were then forever at an end, or otherwise of the corruption, and other humiliating consequences of sepulture, from all which he was exempted. This is all true, and may be based on certain expressions interspersed through this discourse. But there are others which can only be understood with reference to *hell*, properly so called; not the hell of the damned, but those subterraneous prisons wherein the souls of the just were retained until heaven was opened for them. Such is the expression of David, which St. Peter quotes in support of what he asserts: Thou *wilt not leave my soul in hell*. Hell cannot here signify the tomb; for if so, what is called *my soul* should there signify the body, and even a corpse, or dead body, which occurs nowhere in Scripture. It follows that the two meanings must be here recognized; that is to say, we are to understand it that the soul shall neither be left in hell, nor the body in the tomb. The consequence is that there must remain here a certain ambiguity, because that in deciding for either of the two meanings, the other must necessarily be excluded, and thereby run the risk of contravening the intention of the Holy Ghost, who might have meant to express both meanings at once, as he has done in several passages of the sacred books. This ambiguity belongs, therefore, to the text, and the respect due to Scripture forbids it to be explained away.

(2) *The Holy One*, by excellence, that is to say, Jesus Christ. Here we are to understand the text as having more especial reference to the body of the Saviour, sanctified and consecrated by the Word, who, after the separation of the body and soul of Jesus Christ, remained as closely united with them as before they were separated by death. He had long before said: *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*. Calvin, and his disciple Beza, translated this text as follows: Thou wilt not leave my *body* in the *tomb*. They had a good reason for so doing, since neither one nor the other believed in the descent

Thou hast made known to me the ways of life: thou shalt make me full of joy (1) with thy countenance. Ye men, brethren," adds the apostle, "let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David; that he died, and was buried; and his sepulchre is with us unto this present day. Whereas, therefore, he was a prophet, and knew that *God had sworn to him with an oath that of the fruit of his loins one should sit upon his throne;* foreseeing this, he spoke of the resurrection of Christ. For neither was he left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses. Being exalted, therefore, by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath (2) poured forth this which you (3) see and hear. For David ascended not into heaven; but he himself said: *The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand until I make thy enemies thy footstool.* Therefore, let all the house of Israel know most certainly, that God hath made both Lord and Christ this same Jesus, whom you have crucified."

Whilst the chief of the apostles pronounced this admirable discourse, the Holy Ghost, who had suggested it to him, spoke also to the hearts of those who heard him. The first emotion wherewith he inspired them was one of profound sorrow for having been the murderers of the Lord of glory and the Saviour of Israel. (*a*) "Now

(*a*) Acts, ii. 37.

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of Christ's soul into hell. Catholic interpreters who adopt this translation of the text, do not seem to consider that they are thus following in their footsteps.

Before the ascension of Christ the souls of all men descended into *hell*, or at least into Limbo. Hence it was that any one who was then restored to life was always said to be raised, his body from the tomb and his soul from *hell*. It is not surprising, therefore, that David should have made use of this form of speech, which has, moreover, a literal application with regard to Jesus Christ.

(1) The *countenance* of God was always present to Jesus Christ. But the sensible joy which is the natural effect thereof, was suspended during the time of his passion. He resumed the possession of this ineffable joy immediately after he had breathed his last.

(2) *Why should not He be God who hath the giving of the Holy Ghost?* said St. Augustine to the Arians (lib. xv. de Trinitat., cap. 26): *and how great is that God who giveth a God!*

(3) They saw and heard him by his effects, which sensibly manifested his almighty operations.

when they had heard these things they had compunction in their heart (1), and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles: What shall we do (2), men and brethren? Peter said to them: Do penance,"—it was by this same injunction that Jesus Christ and his precursor had also commenced their preaching: "Do penance (3), and be baptized, every one of you, in the name (4) of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (5). For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are far off, whomsoever the Lord our God shall call."

(*a*) "And with very many other words did" Peter "testify," and in order to impress their minds still more deeply, after having enlightened them, he "exhorted them, saying: Save yourselves from this perverse generation. They therefore that received his word

(*a*) Acts, ii. 40.

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(1) This is the literal translation of the Latin text, *compuncti sunt corde.* The Greek has precisely the same signification.

(2) That person is very near salvation whose heart says through his mouth: *What shall I do?*

(3) He has reference to that penance which must precede baptism. It consists in a thorough detestation of the past, together with a firm purpose of amendment, to which must be added, according to the Council of Trent, a love of God, at least commenced. This is what the theologians call penance *vertu.* It is entirely in the heart, and is totally independent of satisfactory works, although these last are the natural consequence of the heart being truly contrite.

(4) That is to say, the baptism instituted by Jesus Christ, which derives all its virtues from his merits, and in which he is named as second person of the most Holy Trinity. Some ancient writers of respectability were of opinion that the apostles had commenced baptizing with this formula: *I baptize thee in the name of Jesus Christ.* This opinion has since been abandoned, and not without reason. The order which Jesus Christ had given them to baptize all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is too precise and too positive to be susceptible of change or dispensation. Hence there is no satisfactory proof that the apostles ever departed from it in any degree whatsoever. It is, therefore, to distinguish the baptism of Christ from the other Hebrew baptisms, and especially that of John, which was, by many, considered sufficient, that St. Peter here says: *Be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ.* The conclusion of these proofs shall be given at the beginning of chap. xix.

(5) Sanctifying grace, according to these words of St. Paul: *The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us* (Romans v. 5). We also understand by the Holy Ghost being given in the sacrament of confirmation, that the apostles usually conferred it immediately after baptism.

were baptized: and there were added" to the infant church "in that day, about three thousand souls (1)."

These were the first-fruits of the sanctifying spirit, whose masterpieces they also were. These first Christians were, of all others, the most perfect; and the same grace which rendered them just, made them also saints of the very highest order. "And they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread (2), and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul:" for "many wonders and signs were done by the apostles in Jerusalem, and there was great fear in all (3). And all they that believed were together, and had all things in common (4).

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(1) This was the foundation of the Church. Jesus Christ had formed the pastors, the pastors formed the people, who, on their very entrance, found the government already established. The people cannot, therefore, assume the right of choosing their pastors without reversing the primitive constitution of the Church. They may have a share in the choice by prayer and by testimony; or, at most, by presentation. The election, properly so called, the preservation, and the jurisdiction must all come from above. Such was Christianity in its cradle; and such shall it be till the end of ages.

(2) The Eucharist, according to the greater number of interpreters. Some understand it of the distribution of common bread, and it is certain that the breaking of bread has these two different meanings in Scripture. The first is, however, to be preferred, not only because it is the most generally followed (and this alone is a strong presumption in favor of texts which are susceptible of different meanings), but also because of the place wherein this word is here found. It is natural to think that the breaking of bread, which is here mentioned between two acts of religion, such as prayer and attention to the word of God, is rather the communion of the Eucharist than the eating of common bread.

It is worthy of note that most of those who understand it of common bread, are Protestants. They will not recognize any allusion to the Eucharist where only bread is mentioned, and this because the inference would be plain that one kind is sufficient for communion.

(3) Believers as well as unbelievers. The former experienced that religious fear with which men ever behold great prodigies; while the unbelievers were stricken with terror on seeing the wonders wrought by the apostles; very naturally fearing that these all-powerful men might become the avengers of the murdered Messiah. A great crime is always followed by great remorse, and though assured confidence be on the face, terror and apprehension are in the soul.

(4) This is the model of a perfect state of society. Plato had conceived this idea; but, as usually happens with philosophers, who seldom imagine any thing good without having therein a certain portion of extravagance, the divine Plato carried his notion so far that even women must be common property. The consequence was that his plan was deemed impracticable, and set down as a visionary scheme. Here we see it perfected and carried out by the fishermen of Bethsaida. We know not what our philoso-

Their possessions and *other* goods they sold (1), and divided them to all, according as every one had need. And continuing daily with one accord in the temple," to join in prayer, "and breaking bread from house to house (2), they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart; praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord increased daily together such as should be saved."

CHAPTER III.

THE LAME MAN CURED AT THE GATE OF THE TEMPLE.—SECOND PREACHING OF ST. PETER.

THE last feature of perfect Christianity was still wanting to them—that is, persecution. Hell and the world were as yet silent and inactive; whether it was that terror had deprived them of voice and motion, or that God, by his almighty power, kept them enchained, in order that these new plants might grow and multiply. But the calm was not of long duration: the slumbering powers were soon aroused into action by a startling prodigy, which was followed by the most brilliant and complete success to the cause of religion. Then broke forth a war which was destined to be obstinately maintained, and in its issue most disgraceful to the aggressors, who were at last to find their entire strength and power overcome by weak-

phers may think of the comparison, but we are quite sure that not one of them is a Plato.

The arm of God is not shortened: the apostles of the New World established this blessed community amongst the most barbarous tribes, and to the confusion of more civilized nations, this admirable policy subsisted in those remote regions for better than a century.

(1) A belief in the ruin predicted for Jerusalem and Judea might, in some measure, have facilitated this resignation of property; still the faith must have been great, indeed, that prompted men to make such sacrifices.

(2) Here it is much more probable that *the breaking of bread* signifies the eating of common bread. What renders this more likely is, that it is said immediately after: *They took their meat with gladness*, &c.

ness itself. The following was the cause of the first outbreak of hostilities.

(*a*) "Peter and John went up into the temple," to assist "at the prayer of the ninth hour (1). And a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb, was carried; whom they laid every day at the gate of the temple, which is called Beautiful, that he might ask alms of them that went into the temple (2). He, when he had seen Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive an alms. Peter, with John, fastening his eyes upon him, said: Look upon us. He looked earnestly upon them, hoping that he should receive something of them. Then Peter said: Silver and gold I have none (3); but what I have I give thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (4), arise, and walk. And taking him by the right hand, he lifted him up, and forthwith his feet and soles received strength. And he leaping up, stood, and walked, and went

(*a*) Acts, iii. 1.

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(1) Three o'clock, P.M. The Jews were wont to assemble at this hour in the temple for a general or joint prayer, which corresponded with our vespers. It is very probable that this prayer either accompanied, or immediately preceded the evening sacrifice. We know that this sacrifice was offered daily, according to the commandment given by God to Moses (Exodus, chap. xxix.). *This is what thou shalt sacrifice upon the altar. Two lambs of a year old, every day continually. One lamb in the morning, and another in the evening.* Those who place the evening sacrifice at three o'clock precisely, believe, in consequence, that it was to unite the reality with the figure that Jesus Christ chose to die at that same hour.

(2) Amongst the Christians, as formerly amongst the Jews, the poor are found standing at the gates of the churches. They presume that *true piety* is never devoid of charity, and in that they are not mistaken. We should take care lest we deceive ourselves on this point.

A poor man who solicits alms at the church-door is the representative of that Jesus to whom we there pray. Let us regard him as we would that he should regard us; let us hearken to him as we would that he should hear us; let us speak to him as we would that he should speak to us; let us give to him as we would have him give unto us: assuredly our measure of grace and mercy shall be his also (Matt., vii. 2).

(3) At present the Church possesses both gold and silver, and that by lawful right. But the duties arising from this possession are so onerous, that the servants of God who are the depositaries of these treasures, are often tempted to sigh after the poverty of early times.

(4) These miracles operated in the name of Jesus Christ were more glorious to him than if he had performed them in his own person. They demonstrated that the power which he possessed was not a borrowed power, but that of an independent sovereign, exercised in whatever way seemed good to him, either by himself or his ministers.

in with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. And they knew him, that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened to him. As he held Peter and John, all the people ran to them, to the porch which is called Solomon's (1), greatly wondering."

(*a*) "Peter seeing" so great a concourse of people, availed himself of the opportunity in order to address to them the following discourse, whose strength and sweetness (for these qualities were admirably blended together) might well soften the hardest hearts, and make the boldest tremble. "Ye men of Israel," said he to them, "why wonder you at this? or why look you upon us, as if by our strength or power we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his son Jesus, whom you delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he judged he should be released. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. But the author of life you killed, whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. And in the faith of his name, this man whom you have seen and known, hath his" almighty "name strengthened;" yes, "the faith which is by him (2) hath given this perfect soundness in the sight of you all."

(*a*) Acts, iii. 12.

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(1) So called, it is supposed, because it was built by Solomon. In that case the Babylonians must have spared it, at least in part, when they destroyed the temple, of which it was a sort of out-work. When the temple was rebuilt this porch was repaired, and made available. At the time of which we speak it was used by the Gentiles who came to worship at Jerusalem. Besides this vestibule, there was another which was reserved for the Jews, and even they were not permitted to enter therein without being purified. Otherwise they were obliged to remain amongst the Gentiles, in Solomon's porch. Next to that was that part of the temple which was called the Sanctuary, which was only to be entered by the priests, who burned incense there on the altar of perfumes, all the people standing without, as we learn from the history of Zacharias (Luke, i.). The *Holy of Holies* was separated from the Sanctuary by that veil which was rent asunder at the moment of our Saviour's death. It is well known that only the high-priest could enter here, and that once a year.

(2) We read in the Latin, *fides quæ per eum est* Most people translate this by faith

After having thus reproached them with their crime, it only remained, as it would seem, to announce the punishment thereof. Perhaps they expected this; perhaps they even feared that the minister of that Omnipotent Just man, so grossly betrayed, might instantly command the earth to open beneath their feet, or cause fire from heaven to descend upon them. Great, therefore, was their surprise, when they only heard from his mouth words of grace and of salvation. "I know" he added, seeking like his master to extenuate their guilt (1), "I know, brethren, that you did it through ignorance, as *did* also your rulers (2). But those things which God had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out (3). That, when the times of

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in him, while others translate it faith *from him*. The first of these two translations is more natural here; the second is more literal: each is expressive of a true meaning, wherefore they are both retained and united.

(1) Luke, xxiii.

(2) We have seen that it was also because of their ignorance that Jesus Christ excused them. It is, however, necessary to ascertain in what manner and how far the Jews were excused by their want of knowledge. They knew well that Jesus was innocent, and thus far they were altogether inexcusable; but they knew not that he was the true Messiah, and the only Son of the living God; hence their guilt was much less than if they had recognized him as such, and yet treated him as they did. But then the question arises, whether this ignorance of theirs was not, in itself, a crime? Certainly it was, since he had given proofs more than sufficient to force conviction upon them. Still their crime was not so great as if they crucified him with a perfect knowledge of what he was; but if they had known him, their malice would have been truly diabolical, in doing as they did. Yet such is the lenity of Jesus that he sought to excuse them, because their malice *might* have been still greater than it was. What an example for Christians, who are obliged to resemble him in this point as in all others! and what a condemnation for those who, having sustained even a trifling injury, perhaps done unawares, not only regard the offender with implacable hatred, but load him with the foulest abuse.

(3) There is here, in the Greek, as in the Latin, the conjunction which signifies *in order that*. It, however, suspends the meaning, and renders it imperfect, and has, therefore, been omitted in this (French) translation, following the example of several commentators. By this means the sense is rendered complete. Does it not also seem that the same should be done with regard to the text? God forbid. There can be no better proof of the fidelity with which the Church has preserved the sacred deposit of the Scriptures, than the fact that she will not permit the omission of a single syllable (*ut*) although it appears to have no other use than that of embarrassing the sense.

refreshment (1) shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send him who hath been preached unto you, Jesus Christ, whom heaven (2) indeed must receive until the times of the restitution (3) of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets from the beginning of the world. For Moses said: *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren* (4) *like unto me: him you shall hear according to all things whatsoever he shall speak to you. And it shall be that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people.* And all the prophets from Samuel and afterwards, who have spoken, have told of these days," and of that which was to happen. "You are the children of the prophets, and of the testament which God made to our fathers, saying to Abraham: *In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.*" The blessing, it is true, shall be general; but the family of the holy patriarch shall be always distinguished. For "to you (5) first, God," faithful to his

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(1) Here, as in several other passages of Scripture, by refreshment is meant the happiness of heaven. This word, when taken in connection with what precedes and follows, signifies: Do penance, that you may obtain the remission of your sins, so that when Jesus Christ shall come to judge the world, you may be found just, and so be made participators in the happiness of heaven.

(2) He is in heaven in his natural and visible state; but this does not prevent him from being really here on earth, hidden under the Eucharistic species. Judging of this by the senses, it is just as if he were not present. We make this remark because Protestants have abused this text in order to combat the doctrine of the real presence.

(3) All shall be re-established, 1st, By that renewal of heaven and earth, clearly foretold by St. Peter when he said (2 Peter, iii. 13): We look for *new heavens and a new earth*—in which justice dwelleth. These last words signify, 2d, That order, interrupted by the rebellion of angels and of men, shall be perfectly restored. All the good shall be happy, and all the wicked unhappy; one only will shall be accomplished—that is, the will of God—whereby all creatures shall be retained under the supreme and eternal dominion of his mercy or justice.

(4) A prophet, and infinitely more than a prophet, since he is the God of the prophets; yet also a prophet in the fullest signification of the word. He spoke in the name of God, and by divine inspiration; he revealed mysteries, and foretold what was to come; hence his disciples sometimes gave him the name of prophet, as we see by the conversation of the two disciples going to Emmaus (Luke, xxiv.). He also gave it to himself, when, speaking of himself, he said: *A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house* (Matt., xiii. 57).

(5) A prodigy of fidelity on the part of God. They have massacred his only Son, yet, because of the promise which he made to their fathers, it is to them *first* that *that*

promise that he would save Israel, and "raising up his Son (1), hath sent him to bless you: that every one may convert himself from his wickedness."

CHAPTER IV.

FIVE THOUSAND MEN CONVERTED.—PETER AND JOHN ARE CAST INTO PRISON.—COUNCIL OF THE APOSTLES.—DISCOURSE OF SAINT PETER.—SILENCE IMPOSED ON THE APOSTLES.—THEIR PRAYER FOLLOWED BY A FRESH INFUSION OF THE HOLY GHOST.—SANCTITY OF THE FIRST CHRISTIANS.—BARNABAS.

A DISCOURSE so touching, preceded and proved beforehand by a miracle so splendid, produced an effect still more wonderful than the miracle itself. (*a*) "Many of them who had heard the word,

(*a*) Acts, iv. 4.

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salvation is to be announced which his Son brought into the world. They are now about to persecute his envoys; they will scourge them, they will stone them, they will crucify them; it matters not, mercy is over them still, and for forty long years to come, it will never cease to call them back; that time once expired, mercy shall be no more for them. The Lord will say: *I have drawn near to this generation for forty years, and I said: Their heart is far from me. They have not considered my ways,* because they would not know them; but at last *I have sworn to them in my anger that they shall never enter the land of promise.*

This is said of the race then living, as it was of those whom God had brought forth from Egypt, to bring them into the promised land, the entrance to which had been closed by their crimes. Of all the generations who composed the people of God, these two were the most favored and the most guilty.

Christians, who are more corrupt than even the infidels, and who, though professing a holy religion, are more wicked than the rest of mankind, are represented by these two generations of the Jews. Well may they tremble at those awful words: *I have sworn in my wrath that they shall never enter the land of promise.*

It is true that the Lord waited forty years for the conversion of these Jews; but it is also true that he granted to the Ninevites only as many days.

Moreover, it was the bulk of the nation that God awaited during forty years. In the course of that time, individual souls perished day by day. For many amongst them those forty years were not even forty days.

(1) *Raising,* and not *bringing to life again,* in the same sense that Moses had said: God will *raise up* a prophet of your brethren, &c.

believed; and the number of the men was made five thousand," without including women.

"As" the two apostles (*a*) "were speaking" (for John supported by his testimony all that Peter said), "as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the officers (1) of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them (2), being grieved that they taught the people, and preached in Jesus (3) the resurrection from the dead. They laid hands upon them, and put them in hold till the next day, for it was now evening," the meeting with the lame man having only occurred about three in the afternoon.

An event such as this could not be regarded with indifference by the chief men of the nation; wherefore, "it came to pass on the morrow, that their princes, and ancients, and scribes, were gathered together in Jerusalem; and Annas, the high-priest (4), and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest." Having brought forth the two apostles, "and setting them in the midst" of the assembly, "they asked: By what power, or by what name have you done this?"

How will that apostle dare to answer these powerful rulers—he who quailed and shrank, on a former occasion, from the questions

(*a*) Acts, iv. 1.

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(1) In Latin *magistratus*. The Greek word signifies a man who exercises military command. This was the officer who commanded the guard of the temple. It is thought that this official and his men were always Jews. It is more than probable that it was to this guard Pilate alluded when he said: *You have a guard; go, guard it* (the body of Jesus) *as you know.*

(2) The Sadducees denied the resurrection, which the Pharisees maintained, and this opposition of opinion rendered these two sects irreconcilable enemies. Still the Pharisees could not bear to have the resurrection preached in the name of Jesus Christ, and thus it happened that the rival sects were found acting together on this occasion; just as we see heretics, divided amongst themselves, yet conspiring together against the common enemy—the vicar of Jesus Christ.

(3) *In Jesus.* Some translate, *in the person of Jesus;* others, *in the name of Jesus;* and others again, *by the power of Jesus.* These three meanings are all correct, so that any one of them corresponds with the text. We have thought it best to leave the choice to the reader, without deciding in favor of any.

(4) It has been already observed that the supreme pontificate was annual, and held alternately by Annas and Caiaphas, his son-in-law. It was then the father-in-law's year of office.

of their servants and domestics? Let us have no fear on that head, either for himself or his cause. On that disgraceful occasion he had been full of self only; but now "Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost," is not afraid to say "to them" openly: "Ye princes of the people, and ancients, hear: If we this day are examined concerning the good deed (1) done to the infirm man, by what means he hath been made whole—be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (2) of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead (3), even by him this man standeth here before you whole. This" he added, applying to them that expression of the Psalmist which they themselves understood as having reference to the Messiah, but would not choose to take it to themselves; "*This is the stone* (4) *which was rejected by*" you "*the builders, which is become the head of the corner.* Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved (5)."

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(1) The Holy Ghost had put this expression in the mouth of St. Peter, and it obviously pointed out the absurdity of the proceeding. The ground of the indictment was not any harm that had been done; it was only, and by their own avowal, the *good deed* which had been done to an infirm man. This was the point on which the two apostles rested their justification.

(2) It was under this name, written in three languages, and fastened to the top of the cross, that Jesus was crucified. His enemies still applied it to him by way of contempt (Acts, vi.). It is also under this name that St. Peter points him out to his fiercest persecutors, and dares to propose him to them as the sole object of faith and hope. The apostles never spared prejudice, and in this they triumphed: they never blushed for the opprobrium which had been heaped upon their master, and hence it was that they were raised to those sublime thrones, where they receive the homage of an entire world.

(3) To see, with their own eyes, this infirm man cured in the name of Jesus Christ arisen from the dead, was a proof of Christ's resurrection as convincing as if they had themselves witnessed that event. If they did not believe in the one case, assuredly they would not have believed in the other.

Let us conclude, however, that they *did* believe, but would not have it known that they did. It is in this way only that we can reconcile the evidence before them with their determined efforts to suppress it. Those who know any thing of the working of the passions will not be surprised at the contradiction between their convictions and their conduct.

(4) This prophecy is taken from Psalm cxvii. Jesus Christ had already quoted it with reference to himself (Matt. xxi.), a short time before his passion, and the Jews then understood that he alluded both to them and to himself.

(5) The best theologians conclude from this text that there is no salvation without





Admiration was the first feeling excited by this discourse in the minds of those who heard it. "Seeing the constancy of Peter and of John, understanding that they were illiterate and ignorant men, they wondered; and they knew them, that they had been with Jesus. Seeing the man also who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But they commanded them to go aside out of the council; and they conferred among themselves, saying: What shall we do (1) to these men? for indeed a known miracle hath been done by them; to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem it is manifest, and we cannot deny it."

We cannot deny it, and must, therefore, believe it. Even the most simple mind would have drawn this natural inference; but these learned and enlightened men concluded otherwise, for their evil passions urged them on to stifle the truth which they could not obviate. "But that it may be no further spread among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak no more in this name to any man. And calling them, they charged them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus."

People in authority, who are accustomed to see those beneath them humbling themselves at their very feet, are very apt to imagine that they can make them do any and every thing through fear,

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explicit faith in Jesus Christ, that is to say, without faith being accompanied by a distinct knowledge of him. This conclusion is certain and indubitable.

Nevertheless, those who have not had this knowledge shall not be condemned precisely because of their ignorance, but for their personal sins; and the words of the prophet shall be justly applied to them: *Destruction is thy own, O Israel* (Osee, xiii. 9), although thou hast not known Him from whom alone salvation cometh.

Every day we hear Christians accuse God of cruelty, because he makes the knowledge of Jesus Christ necessary to salvation, while so many are in utter ignorance of him. True Christians recognize and bless his mercy, in that he has vouchsafed to give them that knowledge which he might withhold from all.

(1) This question displays the vast power of truth. Here we see on the side of its assailants genius, learning, wealth, and power; its defenders are poor, humble, and unlearned: yet because they have truth on their side, they are at no loss either what to do or what to say, while their proud persecutors are reduced to ask each other: *What shall we do?*

This advantage was but the prelude of the great victory which was soon to astonish the world; wherein that same truth, weak and unarmed as it was, should yet prevail over the united powers of earth, up in arms against it, and pursuing it with fire and sword.

never dreaming that they would dare oppose their wishes. This idea soon vanished when "Peter and John answering, said to them: If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye (1); for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Menaces were quite thrown away upon such men as these, but it was the only resource their enemies had. "But they" again "threatening, sent them away; not finding how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified what had been done, in that which had come to pass. For the man was above forty years old in whom that miraculous cure had been wrought."

"Being let go, they came to their own company and related all that the chief priests and ancients had said to them" in order to induce them to keep silence. A still greater trial demanded an increase of grace. Wherefore the brethren "having heard it, with one accord lifted up their voice to God (2), and said: Lord, thou art he that didst make heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them. Who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David (3) thy servant, hast said: *Why did the Gentiles rage, and*

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(1) Where there are two masters, of whom one is subordinate to the other, should their will be different, and their orders contradictory, it is evidently the duty of the person so commanded to obey the orders of his chief ruler; to do the bidding of the inferior master would not be obedience, but rather rebellion against the common master.

St. Peter's reply relates entirely to this maxim, which lies at the base of all order both in religion and society.

It is so plain that even children know it well, yet interest often makes men so blind as to overlook it.

Man bears within him a greater master than all the masters of the world: that is to say, his conscience, whose dictates he must always oppose to the unjust will of the most arbitrary and despotic sovereign.

If it be objected that God alone is above princes, then this consequence follows: obey, then, the voice of conscience, for *it* is the voice of God.

This voice is so sure to be heard, even by the most wicked, that St. Peter hesitates not to say to them: *Judge ye.* It is so imperious that they, at least, dare not judge against it; which, on their part, was tantamount to judging by it.

(2) According to the text, they all lifted up their voice, and all gave utterance to the same prayer. This prayer was, therefore, inspired; for, if there had been no inspiration, there would have been some difference, at least, in the form of expression.

(3) It appears that the Jews, when speaking of David, were in the habit of calling him *our father.* St. Peter, in his first discourse, styles him the *patriarch* David, which

the people meditate vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes assembled together against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth there assembled together in this city against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Herod, and Pontius Pilate (1), with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, to do what thy hand and thy council decreed to be done (2). And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all confidence (3) they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thy hand to cures, and signs, and wonders, to be done by the name of thy holy son Jesus."

The Almighty heard this prayer, which had emanated from himself. "When they had prayed the place was moved wherein they were assembled, and they were all (4) filled with the Holy Ghost (5),

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has precisely the same meaning. It may also be remembered that when Jesus Christ made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the people said: Blessed be the reign of *our father* David. And he might, in reality, be the ancestor of, at least, the greater number of the tribe of Judah. This conjecture is far from being improbable. David had a great number of children, and whilst the sons multiplied, the daughters entered, by marriage, into other families, bringing with them, of course, the blood of David. It might well be, then, that after the lapse of a thousand years, the great bulk of the tribe of Judah were lineal descendants of David, either by his sons or by his daughters; hence may have originated the common custom of saying *our father* David.

(1) Herod had not entered into the conspiracy. It was by a sort of chance that Christ was sent to him, and he had no desire to have him put to death, as we see by that saying of Pilate: "He hath found nothing in him worthy of death." That prince was not then a conspirator, properly speaking; but he was accessory to the passion of our Saviour by the grievous outrage he inflicted upon him. Mockery is classed with murder, and the scoffer shall be punished even as the persecutor.

(2) The malice of the Jews was the immediate cause of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. These were the direct effect of that malice, and God had foreordained the sufferings which were the effect, but not the malice which was the cause. This remark has already been made.

(3) They asked not of God the cessation of persecution, but courage to brave it. They forgot their own safety, and thought only of his glory. This prayer contained a most perfect act of the love of God. So it is that hearts, which are truly filled with that sacred flame, make numberless acts of that divine virtue, almost unconsciously to themselves.

(4) It was by this movement that the Holy Ghost rendered his presence sensible, as he had done on a former occasion by the mighty wind and the tongues of fire.

(5) They had all been filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. They received on this occasion a fresh plenitude thereof, together with the additional graces necessary for braving the approaching persecution. We have not always the actual

and they spoke the word of God with confidence. The apostles," in particular, "did with great power give testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord."

"And the multitude of believers," already very numerous, "had but one heart and one soul:" which was not surprising, for "neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but all things were common unto them (1), and great grace was in them all (2); for neither was their any one needy among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the apostles. And distribution was made to every one

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grace for resisting any attack of temptation, but if we ask it, as the apostles did, we shall be sure to obtain it in the moment of trial, and we shall be sure to verify those words of St. Paul: *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able; but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it* (1 Cor., x. 13).

(1) This community of goods is, as has been observed, the most perfect model of all societies. St. Jerome is of opinion that it was established by St. Mark in Alexandria. For the rest, it does not appear that the apostles succeeded in establishing it in any other place, nor even that they attempted doing so. It would seem that they thought the enterprise would have been impracticable. God, who does not call all men to the same degree of perfection, had so ordained it that this should be the distinctive mark of the first of all the churches. It was, on that account, dearer and more venerable to the other churches, who did not imitate it in this respect. The common fund was exhausted, and there was no means to obtain a fresh supply, so that very soon those were all poor amongst whom there had at first been no poor. Then it was that the other churches made it their duty to assist these who were *voluntarily* poor. We learn this fact from the epistles of St. Paul, who represented the common necessity, and offered himself to carry alms to his people (1 Cor., xvi. 3). Thus they regained by charity a portion of the merit which the others had acquired by their entire detachment from, and voluntary resignation of earthly treasures.

It is the glory of religion that the Church never was, or never is, without a certain number of pious souls to exemplify this perfect mode of living. Such are the religious communities, amongst whom *no one says that aught of the things which he possesses are his own, but all things are common unto them*, and of all the goods so possessed *distribution is made to every one according as he has need.* In this, then, they resemble the primitive Christians of Jerusalem. Let us also imitate the faithful of Corinth by assisting those poor religious, who, possessing nothing, even in common, are entirely dependent on our charity.

(2) An extraordinary grace produced in them this extraordinary charity. Otherwise, they made themselves agreeable, or pleasing to all the people, as has been already said. We are at liberty to choose between these two meanings.

according as he had need. And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (1) (which is, by interpretation, the son of consolation), a Levite, a Cyprian born, having land, sold it, and brought the price and laid it at the feet of the apostles."

CHAPTER V.

ANANIAS AND SAPHIRA.—MIRACLES OF THE APOSTLES.—THEY ARE PUT IN PRISON AND DELIVERED BY AN ANGEL.—ADVICE OF GAMALIEL.—THE APOSTLES BEATEN WITH RODS.

Such is the depravity of the human heart, that vice found means to insinuate itself even in the midst of so many virtues. Avarice assumed the virtue of disinterestedness, the merit of which it thought to attain through the medium of deceit and imposture. But such is the hatred with which God regards duplicity of heart, that even then, under the law of grace and love, he signalized his wrath by a punishment as terrible as any which had been inflicted under the law of severity and dread. By this he makes known to us that, although he is the father of mercy, we must never forget that he is also the God of vengeance. The following example contains a fearful lesson for us.

(1) Of all those who made this sacrifice, St. Barnabas is the only one named. Amongst other reasons for this preference, we may attribute it to the distinguished part which he was destined to take in the ministry. His entrance into the Church was the more worthy of remark, as it was also his entrance to the apostolic office. This he attained, like the other apostles, by leaving all for Jesus Christ. The reader will remember the young man to whom Jesus said: *Go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give it to the poor. Come then and follow me* (Matt., xix. 21). This last expression, in the Saviour's peculiar style of speech, signified a vocation to the apostolic ministry, and the young man would not have it at such a price. St. Barnaby fulfilled the condition, and took his place, for it is likely that it was to him God transferred the grace which the other had refused, even as he had before transferred to St. Matthias the dignity whereof Judas had deprived himself by his crime.

(*a*) "A certain man named Ananias, with Saphira his wife, sold a piece of land (1), and by fraud kept back part of the price of the land, his wife being privy thereunto: and bringing a certain part of it, laid it at the feet of the apostles. But Peter said: Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost, and by fraud keep part of the price of the land? Whilst it remained did it not remain to thee, and after it was sold was it not in thy power (2)? Why hast thou conceived

(*a*) Acts, v. 1.

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(1) Had Ananias taken the vow of poverty, or had he not? This question is still discussed amongst commentators. Nearly all the ancients have decided in the affirmative; and if we come to count the voices for and against, nay, if we even weigh the opinions given, we can no longer doubt that it was so, when we see that opinion entertained by St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, &c. What renders this very probable is the word, he kept back *by fraud*, in Latin, *fraudavit*. If Ananias had not made a vow, there would have been no fraud in what he did. His field, or the money which he got for it, belonged to himself, as St. Peter told him, and he was at liberty to dispose of it in whatever way he pleased. In what, then, had he sinned? or what fraud could there be in sacrificing a portion of his property to the wants of his brethren? Very far from being a sin, this would have been an act of charity; not so great, of course, as if he had given up all, but still good, as far as it went, and meritorious in proportion to the sacrifice he had made. Viewing it in this light, we could neither understand the reproaches of St. Peter nor the punishment inflicted by God. But if Ananias had consecrated all his possessions to the Lord by a solemn vow, then all is explained. He defrauded, he lied to the Holy Ghost—he is, therefore, worthy of death, for God is just, and his ways are perfect.

To the first example of a religious detachment from earthly things, God has annexed the chastisement of the first violators of the holy vow of poverty. We cannot doubt that he thereby intended to instruct and frighten those who lightly make a vow to him, and break it without much remorse. *God is not mocked* with impunity (Gal., vi. 7).

(2) By speaking thus, St. Peter teaches us that the apostles did not compel the first Christians to the sale and sacrifice of all their goods. It was merely a counsel, and not a precept of theirs.

But inasmuch as Ananias was master of his own possessions, some other interpreters have concluded that he was bound by no promise. That was the case, perhaps, before, and even after, the sale. But, 1st, between the time of the sale and his appearance before St. Peter, he might have made the vow. We know not what length of time had intervened, and it required no long time to make such an engagement. 2d, While laying his money at the feet of St. Peter, he might have pronounced the formula of the contract, either by way of vow or of consecration. Scripture does not positively say so, but neither does it state the contrary. 3d, This very action, without being accompanied by words, might testify that the persons so acting solemnly pledged themselves to follow the counsel of Jesus Christ and his apostles, by stripping themselves of all, so as to have

this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied to men, but to God (1)."

The effect of these words was quicker than lightning. "Ananias, hearing *them*, fell down, and gave up the ghost. And there came great fear upon all that heard it. And the young men, rising up, removed him, and carrying him out, buried him."

This tragical scene took place in a private house. "And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in. And Peter said to her: Tell me, woman, whether you sold the land for so much? And she said: Yea, for so much. *Then* Peter said unto her: Why have you agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord (2)? Behold, the feet of them who have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out. Immediately she fell down before his feet, and gave up the ghost (3). And the young men coming in, found her dead; and carried her out, and buried her by her husband."

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nothing more except in common with others. There are actions which speak for themselves, and the meaning of this one, sufficiently expressive in itself, might also have been determined by the apostles; in proposing the counsel, they might have declared that the promise would be inferred from the act of offering, so that *giving* and *vowing* should be considered as one and the same thing. So it is that, without uttering a single word, men solemnly devote themselves to chastity when receiving holy orders, being aware that it is one of the implied conditions.

(1) After having said to Ananias: Thou hast lied *to the Holy Ghost*, St. Peter tells him again: Thou hast lied *to God*. "Therefore, the Holy Ghost is God;" as the holy fathers concluded against the heresiarch Macedonius.

Ananias had lied both to the Father and the Son. It is by appropriation that he is said to have lied to the Holy Ghost, who is called by Jesus Christ the *Spirit of truth* (John, xiv. 17).

(2) They tempted the Spirit of the Lord, because they fancied that St. Peter would have no knowledge of their fraud. For those who saw with what plenitude the Holy Ghost poured himself forth upon the apostles, it was a sort of infidelity not to believe that they had received the gift of prophecy, with all other miraculous gifts; and it is written: *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

(3) Porphyrus, one of the most subtle assailants of Christianty, considered that St. Peter had been criminally severe upon these two persons. Would not one suppose from this that the holy apostle had put them both to death, whereas God alone struck the blow? The voice of St. Peter was but the signal. An ancient father (Tertull., lib. *de Pudicitia*, cap. 21) has regarded this as an image of excommunication. There is certainly a resemblance, inasmuch as, by the word of Peter, the sinner is cut off from the society of the faithful, as Ananias and Saphira were cut off from amongst the living.

Thus perished, with themselves, the hope of these hypocrites (1). Instead of the glory which they had expected to procure for themselves by fraud and by perjury, they involved themselves in perpetual disgrace, and consigned themselves to eternal infamy; an almost infallible proof of their reprobation. For, if they had died in the state of justice, the Lord would not have labored directly to dishonor their memory by inspiring the sacred writer to record the tale of their disgrace; this would have been contradicting that saying of the Psalmist: *The just shall be in everlasting remembrance; he shall not fear the evil hearing* (Ps. cxi. 7).

"And there came great fear upon the whole church, and upon all," even beyond its communion, "that heard these things."

This miracle of terror was the only one of its kind, while those of grace and favor were innumerable. "By the hands of the apostles (2) were many signs and wonders wrought amongst the people," all of them being special benefits. "And they were all (3) with one accord in Solomon's porch (4), but of the rest no man durst

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But there is also some difference; for here Peter spoke, while God alone acted; whereas, in excommunication, Peter speaks and acts, while God ratifies.

(1) Job, viii. 12: *Spes hypocritæ peribit.*

(2) Our translators say only *by the apostles. The hands* have been indicated because it was, in fact, by the imposition of hands that the apostles usually operated miraculous cures, in accordance with that promise of the Saviour: *They shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover* (Mark, xvi. 18).

(3) *All*, according to some interpreters, must be understood as having reference to the apostles only. Others are of opinion that it signifies all the members of the infant church, people as well as pastors. By the former it is asserted that what follows, *of the rest no man durst join himself unto them*, regards the faithful who kept apart from the apostles, either through respect for those divine men, or because they feared to provoke persecution. According to the latter, it is to be understood even of those who believed not, and who, either through fear or respect, did not venture to mingle with the believers. The second interpretation is preferable to the other: 1st, Because respect merely obliged the faithful to treat the apostles deferentially, but not to remain apart from them, whilst nothing can be more unjust than to suspect those fervent Christians of that pusillanimous fear which is here supposed to have been common to *all;* 2d, Because what has been already said (chap. ii., ver. 46), that they *continued daily in the temple, with one accord*, has manifest reference to all the faithful, and this seems to be but a repetition of that passage.

(4) See what has been already said of this porch. It was the usual place of assembly for the apostles and the first faithful; 1st, Because being very spacious, it was capable of containing a great multitude; 2d, Because, not being a part of the temple, properly

join himself unto them; but the people magnified them. And the multitude of men and women who believed in the Lord was more increased; insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets (1) and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow (2) at the least might overshadow any of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities. And there came also together to Jerusalem a multitude out of the neighboring cities, bringing sick persons and such as were troubled with unclean spirits; who were all healed."

This was too much for the rulers of the people: miracles such as these, followed by such brilliant success, were enough to drive them to despair. If this were suffered to go on much longer, what would become of their credit and consideration? Must they be quietly suffered to pass into the hands of this fisherman and the handful of low-born men who were his companions? No, all disguise must be at once thrown off; wherefore, "the high-priest rising up, and all they that were with him (which is the heresy of the Sadducees) (3),

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so called, they could there announce the word of life to all sorts of persons, men and women, Jews and Gentiles, the purified and the non-purified amongst the Jews; 3d, Because the offerings, the sacrifices, and all the service of the temple, which were celebrated in the interior, were in no way interrupted.

The Church was born of the synagogue, and its cradle was the old Jewish temple, which, after that, was only fit to burn. Its destiny was fulfilled.

(1) Many exposed their sick because they already believed; others believed because they saw that those who had been exposed were cured, and others because they had themselves been cured. Hence it is that St. Luke joins the cause to the effect—the cures to the conversions, by the words *so that*.

(2) It has been invariably seen, that on all important occasions it was Peter who spoke, and spoke alone, which shows that he had the authority of a master, and was recognized as such by his colleagues. So must he also have been recognized by the people in this capacity. It was doubtless for this reason that God gave him the gift of working miracles in a more remarkable manner than he did to any of the others.

(3) It has been already remarked that the Sadducees denied the resurrection. It has also been shown that the members of this sect had a double interest in arresting the preaching of the apostles. The latter preached in the name of Jesus Christ, which was odious to them. If the high-priest was not of their party, and the text might prove that clearly enough, at least he favored them openly. We must believe that the foundations of the Jewish state and of the Jewish religion were already shaken when the chief of the sacerdotal order, and the first man in the nation, was not ashamed to appear as the partisan, or, at least, as the declared abettor of materialism.

were filled with envy; and they laid hands upon the apostles, and put them in the common prison."

But what can man do against the Almighty? "An angel (1) of the Lord by night opening the doors of the prison, and leading them out, said: Go, and standing, speak in the temple to the people all the words of this" doctrine of "life. Who having heard this, early in the morning entered into the temple, and taught."

They were still there when "the high-priest coming, and they that were with him, called together the council and all the ancients of the children of Israel: and they sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the ministers came, and opening the prison, found them not there, they returned and told, saying: The prison indeed we found shut with all diligence, and the keepers standing before the doors; but opening it, we found no man within. When the officer of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were in doubt concerning them, what would come to pass."

They were not long without knowing, for "one came and told them: Behold, the men whom you put in prison are in the temple standing, and teaching the people. Then went the officer with the ministers and brought them without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned (2)."

"And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high-priest asked them, saying: Commanding (3) we commanded you that you should not teach in this name (4);

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(1) The apostles wrought no miracles for themselves, nor does it appear that they even asked God to do it for them. Their fate was in his hands, and all their desire was that he might dispose of them according to his own will and pleasure. Thus many of the saints, suffering all manner of pain, asked not relief for themselves, but they asked and obtained it for all others who applied to them.

(2) As they would certainly have been if the apostles had called the people to their assistance, but it would have been a crime to excite the populace against public authority, however unjust and oppressive it might be.

(3) It would seem that they should first have endeavored to ascertain how the apostles had got out of prison. Why did they not do so? Simply because they doubted not that the examination would bring to light that which they feared—a miracle.

(4) They did not mention the name of Jesus. Was this through contempt, or through a secret horror of that name, arising from the remembrance of their crime, and the remorse of which they could not divest themselves?

and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and you have a mind to bring (1) the blood of this man (2) upon us. Peter and the apostles, answering, said: We ought to obey God rather than men."

This they all said with one voice; but it appears that it was Peter alone who continued the discourse: "The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging him upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins (3). We are witnesses of these things, and" with us "the Holy Ghost (4), whom God hath given to all that obey him." These words must have given them to understand that they were very far from receiving so great a gift, since they, so far from obeying God, required others to obey them rather than him.

"When they had heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they" even "thought to put them to death," when God, who had destined them to carry his name to the ends of the earth, raised up for them an advocate where there was little reason to expect one. "A Pharisee (5) named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, respected by

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(1) That is to say: Preach no more this Jesus of Nazareth, for it is an outrage upon us. A fine reason, truly! Just as if they said: You preach that Jesus of Nazareth is risen from the dead, and he is not; you say that you do miracles in his name, and you do not. In such a case not to gainsay these facts is to confess them, and they did this against their will: such is the empire of truth over the most hardened hearts; but so great is the obduracy of certain sinners, that though they cannot deny the truth, they can never be brought to admit it.

(2) They had once been heard to cry out: *His blood be upon us and upon our children.* They then asked what they now fear; very soon they shall feel its effects.

(3) Repentance can only be had through his grace; and the remission of sins, which is the fruit thereof, is only obtained through his merits.

(4) The testimony of the apostles, and that of the Holy Ghost are considered as two distinct testimonies, because the apostles testified that they had seen Jesus Christ after he had risen from the dead, while the Holy Ghost testified, by the miracles which he operated through them, that their testimony was true.

(5) This does not mean that he had their vices, or held their false doctrines; but it is certain that he believed as they did with regard to the capital dogma of the resurrection. This was enough to constitute him a Pharisee, and the name was no reproach, when he was only a Pharisee on this point. Such, too, was Nicodemus, and a few others, who had apparently kept themselves free from the bad leaven of the Pharisees. Had Gamaliel, then, been a concealed disciple, or were his eyes only then opened to the light?

all the people, rising up in the council, commanded the men to be put forth a little while. And he said to them: Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do as touching these men; for before these days rose up Theodas (1), affirming himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves. He was slain, and all that believed him were scattered and brought to nothing. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the enrolling (2), and drew away the people

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This is a doubtful case, and his discourse does not make it any thing clearer. The only thing that can be said is, that if he were only then partially enlightened, he spoke very correctly with regard to his present dispositions. If he were already a believer, while keeping back whatever might have lessened the effect of his words, he yet said nothing contrary to truth. However that might be, he finally believed and became a saint, recognized as such by the Church. He it was who, in the reign of Honorius, appeared to the priest Lucian, and revealed to him the spot where he would find the body of St. Stephen, with those of three other saints, of whom he was one, Nicodemus being another. It may be remembered that the latter opposed the design of the priests and Pharisees when they proposed to put Jesus to death. These two examples serve to show how liberal is God towards those who, though obliged to assist in the councils of the wicked, choose rather to expose themselves to their anger than consent to any thing unjust.

(1) Josephus, in the 20th Book of his Antiquities, speaks of one *Theodas*, who gave himself out for a prophet, and against whom Caspius Fadus, then governor of Judea, sent out his troops, who killed him, and with him several of his followers, the rest being irretrievably dispersed. This happened, according to him, in the fourth year of the reign of Claudius. This is what puzzles the interpreters, because that period was many years later than the discourse of Gamaliel, and there is no probability that Josephus could be mistaken forty years in fixing the date of a public event which he said had occurred in his own time. Let this be as it may, it is still certain, 1st, That Gamaliel quoted this fact on the present occasion; 2d, That he did so before men who were as well informed as himself; 3d, That these men, so far from contradicting, were convinced by his words: consequently this fact can no longer be doubted.

When there is positive evidence of any fact, no other objections can be reasonably admitted than those which directly bear upon that proof.

This principle is certain; and it alone is quite enough to annihilate almost all the objections brought against religion.

(2) This enrolling may have been that which took place at the time of the birth of Christ, or perhaps another which was made eight or ten years later, when Archelaus ceased to reign in Judea. One of the reasons which induced Augustus to have this numbering of the people made, was that he might levy a poll-tax upon all his subjects. The Jews being then in immediate expectation of their conquering Messiah, many of them were opposed to the paying of this tribute. Judas of Galilee, who had put himself at their head, perished, as has been seen. But let it be remarked that Gamaliel, speaking of the followers of *Theodas*, said that they were dispersed and *brought to nothing*,

after him; he also perished; and all, even as many as consented to him, were dispersed. And now, therefore, I say to you, refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it; lest perhaps you be found to fight even against God."

This would have been a bad advice had it not been at least probable that the work was divine. God alone has the right to alter religion, because there is no true religion save that of which he is the author. It was, therefore, necessary to ascertain whether this was his work; and if it were not recognized as such, very far from *letting* those *alone* who called themselves its apostles, they should have been at once put down, so as to secure the safety of religion and of the state itself; for every innovation in religion is sure to shake the latter to its very foundations. But, if they saw there the hand of God, they must not, by opposing it, oppose God himself, and thereby expose themselves to ruin all, under pretence of saving all. Now it was to make this examination (the result of which appeared to him little less than certain) that Gamaliel sought to urge his colleagues; and as they had not yet done so, he persuaded them not to use any ultra measures until they had considered the matter over. This was the point to be gained at the moment, and in this he succeeded. "And they consented to him," without starting any objection. But, inasmuch as they had been persuaded, without being converted, "calling in the apostles, after they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the

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whereas those of Judas were only stated to have been *dispersed*. The fact is, that Judas had infused into the public mind the leaven of sedition, which continued to ferment, especially amongst the Galileans, many of whom, according to Josephus, chose rather to suffer death and torture than to pay tribute to Cæsar, or recognize him for their sovereign. Some even hold that it was because Jesus Christ was a Galilean, at least by education and abode, that those who tempted him put the question to him whether it was *permitted* to pay tribute to Cæsar. However this conjecture may be, it is certain that this bad spirit was never wholly crushed; that, from Galilee, where it had been fostered, it spread throughout the whole country, and ended in that general insurrection which brought on the final destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the entire people.

name of Jesus, and they dismissed them. And they, indeed, went from the presence of the council rejoicing (1) that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus." Their zeal, far from being cooled, appeared to have acquired fresh ardor and intrepidity. "And every day they ceased not, in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus."

CHAPTER VI.

MURMUR OF THE GREEKS AGAINST THE HEBREWS.—ELECTION AND ORDINATION OF THE SEVEN DEACONS.—STEPHEN FULL OF GRACE AND STRENGTH.—THE JEWS DISPUTE AGAINST HIM.—HE IS SEIZED BY THEM AND BROUGHT BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

MEN are always men; and even in the best cultivated garden the skill of the gardener is constantly required in pruning and planting; so also in the holiest communities there will be always deficiencies to supply, and excesses to prune away. Those who for some time had but one heart and one soul began, at length, to disagree. The very bond of union became a cause of dissension; and charity, founded on the community of goods, was disturbed by the inequality of the respective shares. (*a*) "In those days, the number of disciples increasing" (the blood of the apostles was already fertilizing the soil of the church), "there arose a murmuring of the Greeks (2)

(*a*) Acts, vi. 1.

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(1) They figured to themselves Jesus Christ under the lash of his tormentors, and they exulted in the thought that they were thus made like unto their divine master in undergoing a punishment similar to his. So it is that the just, persecuted, outraged, stripped, and tormented, see Jesus Christ in all these conditions, and if they are sensible of grief it is because they find their sufferings inferior to those of their Lord and Saviour.

(2) Jews who were natives of a country wherein Greek was spoken; of this class, too, were those who had been born in Judea of Greek parents, and continued to speak the language which they learned from their parents.

against the Hebrews (1), for that their widows were neglected (2) in the daily ministration (3)."

It was reasonable that in supplying the provisions as well as in the distribution thereof, Hebrews rather than Greeks should be employed, as it is always to be expected that the people of the country are the best for such purposes. But it was natural that the natives of the country should pay less attention to strangers than to their own countrymen, amongst whom were their acquaintances, friends, and kindred. That was indeed so natural that those who did it might be scarcely conscious of the preference, especially when the applicants becoming more numerous (owing to the recent conversions), it was found more difficult to preserve order; but also, because the thing is so very natural, that the foreigners might easily imagine that it was done when it really was not, or, at least, that their own imagination magnified it into a cause of complaint. The apostles might well understand this, for we do not find that they reproached any one for this fault.

Nevertheless, it was for them to put a stop to these murmurs and restore peace. So, "the twelve, calling together the multitude of the disciples, said: It is not reason that we should leave the word of God (4) and serve tables (5). Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of good reputation (6), full of the Holy Ghost

(1) Jews, natives of Judea, and speaking the language of the country. This could no longer be called the Hebrew tongue, being a jargon composed of Hebrew and Chaldaic, owing to the sojourn of their fathers in Babylon.

(2) *Despised.* This is the literal signification of the Latin and Greek word. Here it means *neglected*, or *unassisted*, as, on the contrary, the word *honor* is often employed in the New Testament to signify assisting, or relieving necessities (Matt., xv. 6; 1 Tim., v. 3 and 7).

(3) Some interpreters are of opinion that the cause of the discontent was the little respect with which the Greek women were treated, in being excluded from the distribution. This explanation is very probable, and appears to have been grounded on the meaning usually given to the word despise (*mépriser*); it has been shown, however, that that was not the only meaning attached to the word.

(4) The administration of church property belongs to the bishops as well as the ministry of the word. This is only said in order to teach them what they ought to do through others, and what they are obliged to do themselves.

(5) By the service of tables is understood all the many wants that were to be supplied, such as clothing, &c., as well as the eating and drinking.

(6) It seems that if all this trouble had proceeded from the national jealousy of the

and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

"And the saying was liked by all the multitude. And they chose Stephen (1), a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles: and they, praying, imposed hands upon them (2)."

Thus religion acquired a new order of ministers. These had been dispensed with so long as those of the first order were able to do all themselves; but when, from the great increase of the flock, the apostles had need of co-operators, God inspired them to engage these. The service of the tables was the direct purpose of their ordination. But though it was one of their peculiar functions to preside there, it was the least important of their duties: the regulation of all ecclesiastical assemblies, the preaching of the Gospel, and even the administration of the body and blood of Christ, were all within their province. The apostles being no longer distracted by other cares, and being now assisted by new preachers of the Gospel, "the word of the Lord increased, and the number of the disciples was multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly: a great multitude also of

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women, it would have been remedied by admitting some Greek women to minister with the Jewish females. An election so solemn denotes an object of much greater importance.

(1) Stephen is known all over the earth. Next to him the most celebrated was Philip, who here holds the second place. It was he who baptized the eunuch of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia. He also converted by his preaching and his miracles, a great number of Samaritans, amongst whom was Simon the Magician. He had four daughters who were virgins and prophetesses. He received (chap. xxi.) the name of evangelist, which, in his case, signifies no more than a preacher of the Gospel. The Church celebrates his memory on the 6th of June. The four next mentioned are all recognized as saints. Nicolas is the only one whose name is not found in the Roman martyrology; which omission leaves the question still undecided (a question on which the ancients could not agree) whether he was not the founder of that sect of Nicolites spoken of in the second chapter of the Apocalypse. The name of *proselyte*, given to him, shows that he was a Gentile who had embraced the Jewish religion. All the seven have Grecian names, whereby it appears that the Greeks were deprived of all cause of complaint.

(2) Notwithstanding the opinion of some theologians, it is evident that the imposition of hands, joined with prayer, decides this to have been a solemn ordination. Such is the opinion commonly adopted by the Church, which, in the ordination of deacons, begs of God that the subjects presented *may be worthy of the grade and order to which Stephen and his companions, to the number of seven, were elevated by the choice of the apostles.*

the priests obeyed the faith," submitting thereto their reason, hitherto so stubborn and intractable (1). A remarkable effect of the prayer which Jesus, before he expired, offered up for his persecutors.

God wished to have it understood that the newly established order was not of human institution, but rather a sacred ministry appointed by himself. This fact he manifested to the world by the triumphant success which followed the preaching of the first of the deacons. "Stephen, full of grace and fortitude (2), did great wonders and signs among the people." So much so, that the wrath of the persecutors was concentrated against him. "Then arose some of that which is called the synagogue (3) of the Libertines (4), and of the Cyreneans, and of the Alexandrians, and of them that were of Cilicia and Asia (5), disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit (6) that spoke" by his mouth.

They could not answer, but they could calumniate him. "Then they suborned men to say they had heard him speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God (7). And they stirred up

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(1) Chrysost., *Homil.* 14, *in Acta.*

(2) Full of *fortitude* because he was full of grace: man, if left to his own strength, is but weakness itself.

(3) As religion attracted to Jerusalem Jews of all nations under the sun, so each nation had its synagogue wherein all those assembled who belonged to the same country, and spoke the same language. It was this that had multiplied the synagogues in Jerusalem even to the number of four hundred and upwards, as has been said elsewhere.

(4) The Latin word *libertinorum*, in its proper signification, means *the sons of freedmen.* They were Jews who had been born in Rome of parents who had been slaves, but were afterwards freed. Augustus assigned them a district beyond the Tiber, where they were free to dwell, and to profess their own religion.

(5) Asia Minor, now called Natolia, is only a province of Asia proper, one of the four quarters of the globe. It has been remarked that St. Stephen had to dispute with men from three different quarters of the world, being all that was then known; for the Cyreneans and the Alexandrians were from Africa, and the *Libertines*, being natives of Rome, were of course Europeans.

(6) There was seen in his person the accomplishment of our Saviour's promise to his disciples, that it would not be they who should speak, but the spirit of his Father speaking through them (Matt., x. 20), and that he would give them a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries should not be able to resist or gainsay (Luke, xxi. 15).

(7) If he had blasphemed against Moses he would have blasphemed against God, by whom Moses had been sent; but this was a manifest calumny, for there can be no doubt that he spoke of Moses according to the principles of Christianity. Now, a Christian,

the people, and the ancients and the scribes; and, running together, they took him, and brought him to the council. And they set up false witnesses, who said: This man ceaseth not to speak words against the holy place and the law. For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth (1) shall destroy this place (2), and shall change the traditions which Moses delivered unto us. And all that sat in the council looked on him, and saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel." This prodigy suspended their fury, and, as it were, restrained their hands while he addressed to them a long discourse, which it was the will of God that they should hear to the end.

CHAPTER VII.

DISCOURSE OF ST. STEPHEN.—HIS DEATH.—SAUL IS ACCESSORY THERETO, AND KEEPS THE GARMENTS OF THOSE WHO STONE HIM.

STEPHEN being in the midst of the assembly, and the witnesses having been heard (*a*), "the high-priest said: Are these things so?" Whereupon Stephen "said: Ye men, brethren, and fathers, hear. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia (3), before he dwelt in Charan. And he said to him:

(*a*) Acts, vii. 1.

who knows his religion, never thinks of speaking ill of Moses, whom he regards as the greatest, and perhaps the holiest man of the Old Testament.

(1) It has been already shown that it was with a view to render Jesus contemptible that they called him the Nazarene.

They produced against Stephen, not his own words, but their interpretation of their meaning, together with whatever inferences they pleased to deduce therefrom; this is what made them false witnesses. In order to give true testimony, they should have given his own very words, and their natural signification.

(2) He might have said that the new law which he promulgated was the perfection, but not the destruction of the old law; and he might have said, too, that Jesus Christ had predicted that the temple should be destroyed, but not that He should be its destroyer.

(3) Now Diarben, or Diarbekir, a country situate between the Tigris and the Euphra-

Go forth out of thy country and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then he went out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charan. And from thence, after his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein you now dwell. And he gave him no inheritance in it, no, not the space of a foot: but he promised to give it him in possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child (1). And God said to him: *That his seed should sojourn in a strange country, and that they should bring them under bondage, and treat them evil for the space of four hundred years* (2): *and the nation which they shall serve will I judge, said the Lord, and after these things they shall go out and shall serve me in this place.* And he gave him the covenant of circumcision, and so he begot Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day. Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs. And

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tes. It is said in Genesis that Abraham was then in Ur of the Chaldeans, a province bordering upon Mesopotamia, properly so called; but as there are authors who give a greater extent to Mesopotamia, and others to Chaldea, so Moses might have said, in accordance with the latter, that Abraham was then in Chaldea; and, agreeing with the former, St. Stephen might have said that he was in Mesopotamia. There are some other points of difference between the accounts given by St. Stephen and by Moses, but it will be seen that they are as easily reconciled as in this instance.

(1) Abraham well deserved to be called the Father of the Faithful, and nothing could be more just than that expression of St. Paul: *He against hope believed in hope* (Rom., iv. 18). For he believed that Sara should bear him a son, though they were both far beyond the age for having children; he believed that this son should be the progenitor of an innumerable posterity, even when he had his arm raised to immolate him, and had no reason to hope that he could avoid making the sacrifice; he believed that the country of which he owned not one foot should yet be the inheritance of his descendants; and, being bound to believe that they were to obtain it by conquest, he had also to believe that they were previously to be slaves and wanderers for full four hundred years. Man is so entirely governed by the senses, that whatever is contrary to their evidence he invariably sets down as improbable; and on this account it may be said that it was harder for Abraham to believe all this than it is for us to believe in the mystery of the Trinity. Zacharias, who never doubted the mystery of the Incarnation, could scarcely believe that he and his wife (who was far advanced in years, and, moreover, considered barren) should have a son born to them.

(2) St. Stephen said four hundred years. Moses (Exod., xii. 40) and St. Paul (Gal., iii. 17) say four hundred and thirty years. These latter reckon from the time of Jacob's journey into Egypt, when the famine compelled him to leave Chanaan, and go in quest of provisions; St. Stephen counts from the birth of Isaac, when the posterity of Abraham commenced, that being the chief object of this prophecy.

the patriarchs, through envy, sold Joseph" to be taken "into Egypt; but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his tribulations. He gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, who appointed him governor over Egypt, and over all his house."

"Now there came a famine upon all Egypt, and Chanaan, and great tribulation; and our fathers found no food. But when Jacob had heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent our fathers first; and, at the second time, Joseph was known by his brethren, and his kindred was made known to Pharaoh. And Joseph sending, called thither his father Jacob and all his kindred, in all seventy-five souls (1). So Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, and our fathers. And they were translated (2) into Sichem, and were laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Hemor, the son of Sichem (3)."

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(1) Moses reckons seventy-six, including Jacob, Joseph, and those of his children who were born in Egypt. The Septuagint says, with St. Stephen, seventy-five, exclusive of Jacob, Joseph, and his children; but it is more than probable that this includes the wives of the sons of Jacob, who passed into Egypt with their husbands. According to these different modes of reckoning all these calculations are correct, and by no means contradictory.

(2) *They* were translated, that is, the sons of Jacob, and not Jacob himself, who was *buried in the double cave which Abraham had bought together with the field for a possession of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hethite* (Gen., l.). Mention is only made in the Old Testament of the translation of the bones of Joseph; yet it is quite certain that the bodies of all his brethren were likewise removed, and that they, too, were interred in Sichem; St. Stephen makes the assertion too positively for us to entertain any doubt about it. This tradition had been handed down amongst the Jews, and St. Jerome speaks of having seen at Sichem the tombs of the twelve patriarchs, so that they were pointed out so lately as his time.

(3) It was not at Sichem, but adjacent to Hebron, and *over against Mambre*, that Abraham purchased the field wherein he was interred, and after him Isaac and Jacob, as has been stated. Yet we do not read in Genesis that Abraham had bought a field at Sichem. No; but we read there, 1st, That Jacob bought part of a field of the sons of Hemor, father of Sichem, and that he there erected an altar (Gen., xii. and xiii.). Now we have only to suppose that Abraham had bought, as Jacob did, the place whereon he raised the altar at Sichem, and St. Stephen will be in perfect accordance with Moses. If it be objected that it is not very likely that Abraham purchased all the places whereon he erected altars, we may reply that he might have done on this particular occasion what he was not in the habit of doing; and it may well be imagined that if Abraham could sometimes erect an altar in a field without purchasing the right to do so, it might often

"And when the time of the promise drew near, which God had promised to Abraham, the people increased and was multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose in Egypt who knew not Joseph. This same dealing craftily with our race, afflicted our fathers, that they should expose their children, to the end they might not be kept alive."

"At the same time (1) was Moses born, and he was acceptable to God; he was nourished three months in his father's house. And when he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter took him up and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians: and he was mighty in his words and in his deeds (2). When he was full forty years old, it came into his heart

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happen that the owner would not give his consent. The truth of the Scriptures, taken altogether, is quite independent of these trifling discrepancies, whether we can succeed in making them agree, or are forced to leave them as we find them.

(1) Here then properly begins the apology of St. Stephen. It may, indeed, be found to have its foundation in the preceding; but if it be compared with the subject of the accusation, it will be seen that he has not yet replied thereto. Wherefore, then, this long preamble? Its use or necessity cannot, indeed, be clearly ascertained, and what we are going to say on the subject is but a conjecture of our own. Those who spoke of religion in the assemblies of the Jews, were in the habit of commencing by a brief summary of their past history, at least in its earlier stages, such as the vocation of Abraham, the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the conquest of Chanaan, &c. This method might have its peculiar advantages which need not here be explained, but it is evident that it was the usual way of making the exordium, which they brought to bear on the particular subject of which they meant to treat. This, as we have said, is no more than a supposition, supported, however, by the fact that we find the same method adopted by St. Paul (Acts, xiii.). He had to prove to the Jews of Antioch of Pisidia that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah, and his proof commenced only at the place where he speaks of David, to whom God had promised that the Messiah should spring from his blood; nevertheless, he sets out with an abridged account of the history of the Hebrew people, runs through the principal events thereof, from the going forth out of Egypt till the time when God made choice of David to succeed Saul: a recital which would have been quite superfluous had it not been warranted by custom.

(2) It will be seen (ver. 35) that St. Stephen reproaches them with having on this occasion refused to receive the mission of Moses: whereby it became necessary that God should attest its authenticity by some miraculous sign which should force them to acknowledge it. We do not find, however, that Moses had as yet performed a miracle; but does not the Scripture clearly insinuate that he had when it describes him as mighty in words and *in deeds*, which is the same form of speech employed by St. Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, to express the miraculous power of Jesus Christ? (Luke, xxiv. 19).

to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And when he had seen one of them suffer wrong, he defended him; and striking the Egyptian (1), he avenged him who suffered the injury. And he thought that his brethren understood that God by his hand would save them; but they understood it not. And the day following, he showed himself to them when they were at strife, and would have reconciled them in peace, saying: Men, ye are brethren, why hurt ye one another? But he that did the injury to his neighbor thrust him away, saying: *Who hath appointed thee prince and judge over us? What, wilt thou kill me, as thou didst yesterday kill the Egyptian?* And Moses fled upon this word, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begot two sons."

"And when forty years were expired there appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sina, an angel (2) in a flame of fire in a bush. And Moses seeing it, wondered at the sight. And as he drew near to view it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying: *I am the God of thy fathers; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* And Moses being terrified, durst not behold. And the Lord said to him: *Loose the shoes from thy feet, for the place wherein thou standest is holy ground. Seeing I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down* (3) *to deliver them. And now come,*

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(1) He killed him lawfully, because by divine inspiration. This is the opinion of St. Augustine. We find in the Old Testament several inspirations of this kind, and it would be impious to deny, or yet to condemn them. The evangelical law recognizes no equals, and it would be the height of fanaticism to presume either to find fault with or to improve it.

(2) He who is here called an angel is spoken of as the Lord in the following verse. This difference has given rise to two different opinions amongst theologians. Some have thought that he who spoke to Moses was the Son of God, who is called by Isaiah the Angel of the Great Council. Many others think that it was an angel who is called the Lord, because he represented the Lord, and spoke in his name. This last opinion is more generally received, and seems to be the most probable. *God*, says St. Paul, *having spoken on divers occasions, and many ways, in times past, by the prophets; last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son* (Heb. i. 1). Do not these words seem to give to the evangelical law the exclusive privilege of having been announced by the Son in person?

(3) God, by his immensity, is always present in every place. He can neither descend, nor ascend, nor pass in any way from one place to another, since he would still remain

and I will send thee into Egypt. This Moses, whom they refused, saying: *Who hath appointed thee prince and judge?* him God sent to be prince and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out, doing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the desert forty years. This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel (1): *A prophet shall God raise up to you of your own brethren, as myself; him shall you hear.* This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sina, and with our fathers; who received the words of life (2) to give to us. Whom our fathers would not obey; but thrust him away, and in their hearts turned back into Egypt, saying to Aaron: *Make us gods to go before us. For, as for this Moses, who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him.* And they made a *golden* calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. And God turned, and gave them up (3) to serve the host of heaven (4), as it

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in the place which he left, as he also had been in the place whither he was supposed to go. Hence, when he says in Scripture: *I have come down,* or *I will come down,* he means that his presence, which is only visible in heaven, shall then be made sensible on earth by some signal manifestation either of justice or of mercy.

(1) In reporting the conversation of God with Moses, St. Stephen had made it very evident that he was not opposed to Moses, since he thereby admitted the divinity of his mission. Yet still it might be objected that he was, nevertheless, endeavoring to put an end to his law, and substitute another in its place. He meets this objection, or rather forestalls it, by referring to the prophecy of Moses, which announced another legislator, who was to be obeyed under pain of incurring the eternal vengeance of God. This, then, was not speaking against Moses, but announcing after him, and in accordance with his words, a second legislator. They who rejected the latter without any other reason were virtually making Moses a false prophet.

(2) *The words of life,* that is to say, the law of God, which should confer life on those who observed it. Some understand this of temporal life, others of that which is eternal. Both meanings are correct. It must only be observed that the ancient law only procured for its observers temporal life; that is to say, temporal prosperity; and that eternal happiness, which was attained by its observers, could only be merited by the grace of Jesus Christ.

(3) *Gave them up;* a form of speech used in Scripture to signify that God permitted them to be delivered up. God never instigates to crime; but it often happens that he does not restrain those who commit it. Past sins are the cause thereof, and it is in this sense that we say that one sin is punished by another.

(4) The stars and planets, which were amongst the earliest objects of idolatry. Then

is written in the book of the prophets: *Did you offer victims and sacrifices to me for forty years in the desert* (1), *O house of Israel? And you took unto you the tabernacle of Moloch* (2), *and the star of your god Rempham, figures which you made to adore them. And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.*"

Moses was recognized, and his pretended adversary rendered to him the most magnificent testimony which we find recorded of him in the sacred Scriptures. It remained to speak of the temple, to which the holy Levite paid equal homage, since he virtually acknowledged that it was by divine inspiration David had conceived the design of erecting it, a design which Solomon carried into execution. But it was further necessary to undeceive the Jews by showing them that the true worship, which they associated exclusively with their own temple, was not necessarily connected with stone walls and a house built by the hand of man. With this intention, Stephen continues thus:

"The tabernacle of the testimony (3) was with our fathers in the desert, as God ordained for them, speaking to Moses that he should make it according to the form which he had seen. Which, also, our fathers receiving, brought in with Joshua into the possession of the

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the nations decreed divine honors to extraordinary men, who had distinguished themselves by great actions or by benefits conferred on the human race. These two worships appear to have been united in course of time by the appropriation of the names of these celebrated men to the stars and planets, which were then called Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, &c., names which they still retain.

(1) Sacrifices were offered to God in the desert, when he gave the law, when Aaron and his children were consecrated, and also at the consecration of the tabernacle. The sacred writers mention no others, which fact, joined with the preceding, gives rise to the opinion that the sacrifices then instituted were only to be observed after the Israelites had been established in the land of promise.

(2) According to ancient records cited by some able critics, Moloch was the God Mars, and Rempham was Saturn. Rempham is only named in Scripture on this one occasion. Moloch we find often mentioned, and he is called the god of the Ammonites. It was in honor of this sanguinary divinity that parents burned their infant children; God often reproaches the Israelites for having imitated them in these inhuman sacrifices.

(3) *Of the testimony*, or declaration of the divine will, which is principally, and perhaps wholly understood of the tables of the law, according to what God said to Moses: "The ark wherein you shall place the *testimony* which I will give you" (Exod., xxv. 21).



STONING OF ST STEPHEN

Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers;" there was then only the tabernacle "unto the days of David. Who found grace before God, and desired to find" a place whereon to build "a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built him a house. Yet the Most High dwelleth not in houses made by hand, as the prophet saith: *Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool. What house will you build me, saith the Lord, or what is the place of my resting? Hath not my hand made all these things?*"

The foregoing was pronounced in that calm and moderate tone which befits an instructive recital; but Stephen soon changes it for another. Whether he considered that invective would be the most successful, because the least expected; or that, reading in the eyes of his auditors their inflexible obstinacy, he found it useless to attempt conciliation: "You stiff-necked," he suddenly added, in a transport of indignant zeal, Jews are ye in name, but "uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do you also. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them who foretold of the coming of the Just One; of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers: *you*, who have received the law of the ministry of angels, and have not kept it."

Notwithstanding the impetuosity of this attack, its reasoning was both strong and cogent against the Jews. The argument it contained was: Your fathers have at all times resisted those who spoke to them on the part of God. We believe that you resemble them in this point. Believe it also yourselves: at least, fear it, and give not way too rashly to that passion, which, under the appearance of zeal, may well be in active opposition to the divine will. This is what Gamaliel had before established, though in a different way. His discourse had been to a certain extent satisfactory to his hearers, but not so with this. Being more vehement, it did but embitter and exasperate the wicked hearts of those who heard him. "Hearing these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed with their teeth at him." God permitted it to be so, that Stephen might have the honor of being the first martyr. "But"—and this it was that excited them to fury—"he being full of the Holy Ghost, looking steadfastly up to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus stand

ing on the right hand of God (1). And he said: Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Then, as if it had been blasphemy to relate a celestial vision, "they, crying out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and with one accord ran violently upon him. And casting him forth without the city, they stoned him (2): and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, invoking and saying: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit (3). And falling on his knees he cried with a loud voice, saying: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge (4). And when he had said this, he fell asleep in the Lord (*a*). And devout men took order for Stephen's funeral, and made great mourning over him (5).

(*a*) Chap. viii., ver. 2.

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(1) St. Stephen saw with the eyes of his body the sacred humanity of the Saviour; God having, by a miracle, rendered it visible to him at such an immense distance. It is difficult to determine what he saw that is here called the *glory of God*. Whatever it was we are bound to believe, though some maintain the contrary, that it was not the divine essence in itself, for, many years subsequent to this vision, the apostle St. John wrote: *No man hath seen God at any time* (John, i. 18).

It is said in several passages of the Holy Scriptures that Jesus is *seated* on the right hand of God. This is expressive of his equality with his Father, and of the eternal repose which has succeeded the toils of his mortal life. On this occasion he appears *standing*, ready to succor and to crown his champion.

(2) Was this the punishment which God had decreed for blasphemers? It was ordained that the witnesses should be those who threw the first stone (Deut., xvii. 7). They took off their outer garments so as to have their arms free.

They stoned him without any judgment having been pronounced upon him. One would suppose that having no longer the right of condemning to death, they would have gone to Pilate to solicit his consent. But it seems that their rage would not permit them to wait for any form. This was one of those tumultuous movements then so common amongst the Jews, and which the Roman magistrates could not always control.

(3) Jesus, when expiring, addressed the same prayer to his Father. To address it to himself was confessing his divinity, and his equality with the Father.

(4) We here see the difference between the false zeal which springs from fanaticism, and that true zeal which has charity for its basis. The former smites, while the latter demands mercy for its persecutors.

Zeal is, of all virtues, the noblest, and yet the most liable to illusion; just as the most precious substances are the most exposed to be adulterated and counterfeited It must be cherished, and yet carefully watched.

(5) By this *great mourning* is not only understood tears and lamentations, but also the funeral honors which were rendered to St. Stephen.

CHAPTER VIII.

PERSECUTION OF THE FAITHFUL.—CONVERSION OF THE SAMARITANS.—SIMON THE MAGICIAN.—THE EUNUCH BAPTIZED.

(*a*) "AND Saul was consenting to his death." It may even be said that in keeping the garments of the murderers he became an accomplice in their crime. This man, who is to occupy so prominent a place in this history, tells us himself that he was an Israelite (1), of the tribe of Benjamin; a Pharisee in what regards the law; in his zeal, persecuting the Church of God; as far as legal justice was concerned living a blameless life, surpassing the greater part of his age and nation in the knowledge and practice of Judaism, and in his ardent attachment to the traditions of his fathers. In this portrait, drawn by his own hand, we may perceive both the germ of his virtues and the source of his fiery zeal. Integrity so great, joined to a disposition so ardent, must of necessity, if he were in error, make him a furious persecutor of the truth; and, supposing that he knew the truth, these same causes were sure to make him a zealous apostle, in so far as the natural temperament can influence the grace-enlightened mind. He must be either one or the other in the highest degree, and there was a good opportunity just then for persecution. Jewish zeal, emboldened by success, had just thrown off all restraint, and its thirst for blood was increased to fury by the sight of that already shed. (*b*) "At that time there was raised a great persecution against the Church, which was at Jerusalem." All its ministers were dispersed through the countries of Judea and Samaria, except

(*a*) Chap. vii., ver. 59. (*b*) Chap. viii., ver. 1.

(1) *Of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin; according to the law, a Pharisee; according to zeal, persecuting the Church of God; according to the justice that is in the law, conversing without blame* (Phil., iii. 5). *And I made progress in the Jews' religion above many of my equals in my own nation, being more abundantly zealous for the traditions of my fathers* (Gal., i. 14).

the apostles (1). (*a*) "But Saul," the most furious of all, "made havoc of the Church, entering in from house to house, and dragging away men and women, committed them to prison;" whence, as he himself relates, he only allowed them to come forth to go to the place of execution, unless he had succeeded in making them blaspheme the religion of Christ.

The malice of men was instrumental to the work of God. "They, therefore, that were dispersed, went about preaching the word of God." Amongst these new preachers we observe him who, by the death of Stephen, had become the chief of the Levitical order. Philip appears to have replaced him, not only by evangelical zeal, but also by the extraordinary gifts which God transferred to the second of the deacons immediately on the death of the first.

"And Philip, going down to the city of Samaria (2), preached

(*a*) Chap. viii., ver. 3.

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(1) The new Church required the presence of its founders. Thus, although Jesus Christ had told them to fly from one city to another in time of persecution, they yet stood their ground, because this was the time when the pastors were to expose their life for their sheep.

If they had fled on this occasion, it might have been said that they deserted the Church, which was as yet inclosed within the walls of Jerusalem. For several years after this it so happened that the city which had been the cradle of the Church, continued to be its centre, and, as it were, its metropolis.

(2) Samaria was the name both of a country and a city. Hence it might be translated, as some have done, into *a* city of Samaria; but the greater number translate it as *the* city of Samaria, which was the capital of the country. It was founded by Amri, king of Israel, and destroyed by Hircan, but was magnificently rebuilt by Herod the Great, who, in order to conciliate the Emperor Augustus, gave it the name of Sebaste, a Greek word signifying *Augustus*.

When Jesus Christ sent the apostles on their first mission, he forbade them to enter the cities of the Samaritans (Matt., x. 5). He had made himself, however, an exception to this general prohibition, when, at the request of the inhabitants of Sichar, he stopped two days in their city (John, iv.). The interdict was removed when, after his resurrection, he announced to the apostles that they should be witnesses unto him in Jerusalem, in all Judea, *in Samaria*, and to the uttermost confines of the earth. There was, therefore, no objection to their preaching the Gospel amongst the Samaritans. What is said of the *ends of the earth*, gives no very clear intimation of the vocation of the Gentiles. It might as well have been understood of the Jews who were scattered abroad through every country, and so it appears to have been understood up to the time when St. Peter saw that wonderful vision on the occasion of the conversion of Cornelius the centurion.

Christ unto them. And the people with one accord were attentive to those things which were said by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For many of them who had unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, went out. And many taken with the palsy, and that were lame, were healed. There was, therefore, great joy in that city."

"Now there was a certain man named Simon, who before had been a magician in that city, seducing the people of Samaria, giving out that he was some great one. To whom they all gave ear, from the least to the greatest, saying: This man is the power of God, which is called great. And they were attentive to him, because for a long time he had bewitched them with his magical practices. But when they had believed Philip preaching of the kingdom of God, in the name of JESUS CHRIST, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also (1), and being baptized, he stuck close to Philip; and being astonished, wondered to see the signs and exceeding great miracles which were done."

"When the apostles who were in Jerusalem had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John (2), who, when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For he was not as yet come upon any of them (3): but they were only baptized in the name of the

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(1) Most of the ancient fathers, seeing how very soon Simon relapsed into his former sin, are of opinion that he only pretended to believe; but as the text simply says that he believed, we have no reason to doubt of his conversion. The miracles operated by Philip might well convince him of the truth of the doctrine announced by him. Nevertheless, the desire of being enabled to work similar wonders was the sole motive which induced him to embrace this faith; therefore he understood it not in its real object, which was the sanctification and salvation of those who professed it. Hence it might be said that he believed, and yet believed not.

(2) This sending was not, on the part of the apostles, an act of authority, but the result of a common deliberation. Thus *they sent* signifies that they thought it right for Peter and John to go there.

It was because another nation was to be added to the Church, that St. Peter, the head of the Church, went to Samaria.

(3) They had received in baptism the sanctifying spirit, but they had not yet received the Spirit of strength, or any other of those gifts which are the proper effect of confirmation

Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hand upon them (1), and they received the Holy Ghost."

"And when Simon saw that by the imposition of the hands of the apostles the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money (2), saying: Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I shall lay *my* hands he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said to him: Keep thy money to thyself, to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money (3). Thou hast no part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Do penance, therefore, for this thy wickedness; and pray to God, if perhaps (4) this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee. For I see thou art in the gall of bitterness (5)

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(1) In this imposition of hands, the ancients always recognized the sacrament of confirmation. There is no mention of the holy chrism, on which subject the theologians are divided. Some assert that it was used by the apostles, though not specially mentioned; while others are of opinion that it was their special privilege to confer the sacrament solely by the imposition of hands. However that might be, it is certain that unction with the holy chrism has ever since been regarded as indispensable to the due administration of the sacrament.

Baptism makes the Christian; confirmation, if one may say so, finishes and perfects him. The eagerness with which the apostles hastened to bestow it on the newly baptized would alone suffice to prove its importance. To neglect receiving this sacrament when one can obtain it, is a great sin. But how enormous is the guilt of those who, being charged with its administration, yet leave whole nations destitute of so great a boon!

(2) Every one knows that it is from this sacrilegious proposal that the traffic of sacred things has taken the name of Simony. Simon was also the first heresiarch, and most of the heresies of the three first centuries sprang from his foundation. It was always a mixture of Christianity and Platonism, to which each succeeding heresiarch added his own peculiar notions. There is no certainty regarding the dispute between Simon and St. Peter—his flight through the air, and his fall, being obtained through the prayers of the holy apostle. If there is good authority for, there are also strong presumptions against it.

(3) He announces to him the chastisement which he merited; perhaps he even predicted it, as has been already remarked when he spoke of Judas (chap. i.). But although he speaks in the tone of imprecation, he wishes him no ill, since he immediately adds: *Do penance.*

(4) This *perhaps* relates to the dispositions of the penitent, which are always uncertain. For if the dispositions were assuredly good, however enormous the crime might be, its forgiveness was certain.

(5) Commentators cannot agree as to the meaning of this expression—*the gall of bitterness.* Some take it to mean a soul poisoned with malice; others, the vexation with

and in the bonds of iniquity. Simon," frightened but not converted, "answering, said: Pray you for me (1) to the Lord, that none of these things which you have spoken may come upon me."

The two apostles, "having testified, and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem." Their return was but another mission; for as they went along, "they preached the Gospel to many countries of the Samaritans."

The decrees of God were gradually made manifest; and through the agency of one man, another nation was soon to be called to the faith. Philip was again the instrument employed by God. "An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying: Arise, go towards the south, to the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza (2); this is desert. And rising up, he went. And behold a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch (3), of great authority under Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians (4), who had charge over all her treasures, had come to Jerusalem to adore. And he was returning, sitting in his chariot, and reading Isaias the prophet. And the Spirit said to Philip: Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip, running thither, heard him reading the prophet Isaias (5), and he said:

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which Simon saw himself refused; and others, the hatred of God for Simon, owing to his horrible sacrilege. Of these three explanations, the first is the most probable.

(1) It is always good to recommend ourselves to the prayers of virtuous persons, but we must also pray ourselves. The prayers of others will be of little service to us if we employ them solely to avoid the trouble of praying for ourselves.

(2) Gaza had been formerly a city of the Philistines, and was that of which Samson carried off the gates, and where he destroyed, together with himself, several thousands of the Philistines, by pulling down the pillars of a certain edifice. Gaza was taken by Alexander the Great after a siege of two months, and was by him totally destroyed. In course of time a new city was built in its vicinity, and received the name of Gaza. It is the first that is here mentioned, and it is described as *desert*, or waste, in order to distinguish it from the new and inhabited city.

(3) The word *eunuch*, in its original meaning, signifies simply an officer of the royal household, and we are at liberty to believe that this man was only a eunuch in this sense.

(4) A people of Africa, now better known by the name of Abyssinians. They still regard this eunuch as their first apostle, and pride themselves on being the first nation which embraced Christianity, according to that saying of David: *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God* (Ps. lxvii. 32).

(5) If this man was not of Jewish origin he was at least a proselyte, and a good one, too, since he had come to Jerusalem to adore, and whilst on his way, was occupied in reading the Holy Scripture. Because he practised the good which he knew, God was

Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest? Who said (1): And how can I, unless some man show me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. And the place of the Scripture which he was reading was this: *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb without voice before his shearers, so openeth he not his mouth* (2). *In humility, his judgment was taken away. His generation who shall declare, for his life shall be taken from the earth?*"

"And the eunuch, answering Philip, said: I beseech thee, of whom doth the prophet speak this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip, opening his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said: See, here is water, what doth hinder me from being baptized? And Philip said: If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answering, said: I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch (3), and he baptized

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pleased to give him the knowledge in which he was deficient. This is the ordinary course of grace, and perhaps also the literal meaning of those mysterious words of St. Paul: *The justice of God is revealed therein* (that is to say, in the Gospel) *from faith unto faith* (Rom., i. 17); from the Jewish to the Christian faith; from faith in a Messiah to come to faith in a Messiah come and declared.

(1) A good Protestant, even were he otherwise the most ignorant of all men, yet speaking according to the fundamental principle of his sect, would have answered: Oh! yes, I understand—at least I require no interpreter: there is no need of explanation.

(2) This text has been translated word for word, and though interpreters have explained it in various ways, there is yet no certainty with regard to its real meaning. It seems to us more fitting to leave it in its obscurity than to give it a forced meaning. We must simply confess ourselves at a loss to understand it, and this we are not ashamed to do, since St. Augustine, the most enlightened of all the doctors of the Church, has not scrupled to own that there is in the sacred Scriptures much that he does not understand, in fact, far more than his understanding did or could fathom: *In sacris scripturis multo plura nescio, quam scio* (Aug. *Epist.* 119). It was undoubtedly the Holy Ghost who conducted the eunuch to the passage in question, contained in the fifty-third chapter of Isaias. In this chapter there are found so many passages which manifestly refer to Jesus Christ, and to him only, that it would suffice to give to that prophet the title of the Evangelist of the Old Testament. Philip could not have had a more favorable opportunity. He had merely to relate the passion of Jesus Christ, to bring light and conviction to the mind of a man who saw that it had all been predicted so many ages before.

(3) St. Jerome speaks of this water, which is called the Ethiopian's Fountain; it is

him (1). And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more. And he," strengthened by this new prodigy, "went on his way rejoicing," and delighted with his good fortune, he gave himself but little concern that he had lost sight of its visible author. As for "Philip," he "was found in Azotus (2), and, passing through, he preached the Gospel to all the cities till he came to Cesarea (3)." That city was his usual residence, and the Spirit of the Lord might at once have transported him thither; but the time had come when the Lord had decreed that the Gospel should be announced to the people of all that region.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

THE eunuch had been gradually conducted from the darkness of Judaism to the full light of faith. His fidelity to the first grace given him, whereby he had become a pious proselyte, obtained for him that additional grace which made him a perfect Christian. We have already remarked that such is the ordinary course of God's ways, for his operations in the supernatural as well as in the natural

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on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, adjacent to a place named Bethsura, where it springs from the earth, and immediately enters again.

(1) It must be inferred that Philip had previously explained to him at least the principal mysteries of the faith, together with the chief duties of Christianity. His profession of faith includes all that in an abridged form; for in confessing that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, it follows that one believes all, whatsoever he has said, and is willing to do what he has commanded.

(2) An ancient city of the Philistines, between Gaza and Cesarea, but much nearer to the former.

(3) Called in earlier times the Tower of Straton. It is situated on the Mediterranean Sea, and is distinct from another Cesarea, surnamed *Philippi*, from Philip, the son of Herod, who had built it in honor of Tiberius Cæsar. The latter city, which is mentioned in Scripture, was at the foot of Mount Lebanon.

order, have almost invariably their beginning, their progress, and their perfection. But God, the author of this order, is by no means bound to follow it on all occasions. He departs from it when he pleases; and at times signalizes his omnipotent mercy, by striking down the most rebellious will, and subduing hearts which so far from being disposed for the reception of grace, were entirely occupied with self, and opposed to all beside. Of this class was the conversion which we are about to relate; a conversion which snatched from Judaism its most strenuous supporter—changed in one moment a persecutor into an apostle, and, by the conquest of a single man, paved the way for the subjection of the entire world.

"(*a*) And Saul (1) as yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high-priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus (2), to the synagogues, that if he found any men or women of this way, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he went on his journey, it came to pass that he drew nigh to Damascus; and suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And falling on the ground, he heard a voice saying to him: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me (3)? He said: Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord answered: I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad (4).

(*a*) Chap. ix., ver. 1.

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(1) The same name as King Säul's, although differently pronounced; but the Hebrews pronounced it in the same way, that is to say, as though it were two syllables. We learn this from the words of the Saviour, who speaking in Hebrew, said twice, *Saoul, Saoul*, according to the Greek text, which is that here followed. We, therefore, pronounce it wrongly, and though the error is of small importance, we are of opinion that any thing connected with so great a man cannot but be worthy of notice.

(2) Formerly the capital of Syria. We learn from this passage that the Jews were very numerous there, since it appears that they had several synagogues. Those of Jerusalem could have had no authority in that city which was under subjection to a foreign prince. It seems, notwithstanding, that the decrees of the high-priest were executed there; whether it was that the sovereigns of the country had allowed them that privilege, or that they had purchased it for themselves, as we see in certain places, that people, by paying well, obtain indulgences which the laws do not sanction.

(3) Those who, in any way whatsoever, persecute the righteous, may here learn who it is that they attack.

(4) This is a metaphor borrowed from the oxen, which, being goaded, do but irritate the driver if they kick, and draw greater punishment on themselves. This saying of the

And he trembling and astonished, said: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do (1)? And the Lord said to him: Arise, and go into the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do (2). Now the men who went in company with him stood amazed, hearing indeed a voice (3), but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw nothing. But they, leading him by the hands, brought him to Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and he did neither eat nor drink."

"Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias: and the Lord said to him in a vision: Ananias. And he said: Behold I am here, Lord. And the Lord said to him: Arise, and go into the street that is called Straight, and seek in the house of Ju-

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Lord expresses some resistance, either past or present, on the part of Saul. It is very probable that even when he persecuted the faithful with so much fury, he was visited by some rays of divine light, which occasioned certain misgivings in his mind. But having once gone so far, he would not recede. A first engagement often carries men far beyond what they had intended; hurried on by impulse, they cannot stop midway in their course.

(1) This brief sentence comprises the entire conversion of St. Paul. Happy the penitent who, like him, cries out with all his heart: *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

(2) Yet St. Paul declares in his epistles that he had no other teacher than Jesus Christ. A distinction must here be made: he learned by revelation from Jesus himself the knowledge requisite for him as an apostle, and for the instruction of others; but that which it behooved him to learn as a catechumen, and for his own sanctification, he acquired through the agency of Ananias. Hence it was that Jesus had said to him: It shall be told thee *what thou must do.* In all that regards the particular salvation of each, men must be guided by men. The law is general, and without exception. Even those who are charged with public instruction are not exempt from the obligation. Woe to any one of them who imagines himself competent for his own instruction!

Jesus Christ further told him for what ministry he designed him, as will be seen, chap. xxvi., 16th and following verses, when St. Paul related this vision before King Agrippa.

(3) Here it is said that they heard a voice; in chap. xxii., St. Paul, relating the history of his conversion, says that they who were with him heard not the voice of him who spoke to him; the voice, therefore, which they are here said to have heard, is that of Saul, so that there is no contradiction between the two accounts. If it be asked, wherefore, then, the astonishment of the men, it is easy to answer that there was still quite enough to excite both surprise and terror. The wondrous light wherewith they were surrounded; Saul struck to the ground; and the sight of him who had ever been so courageous, lying grovelling in the dust, and quivering with fear; the sound of his voice, too, whereby they knew that he was conversing with some unseen being; all this was sufficient to make them fear and wonder, although they heard not the voice of the Lord, whose will it was that none but Saul should either see or hear him.

das, one named Saul of Tarsus. For behold he prayeth." At the same time Saul, who had to be assured that this man was sent by God, "saw," in spirit, "a man named Ananias, coming in and putting his hands upon him that he might receive his sight. Ananias answered: Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints in Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that invoke thy name. And the Lord said to him: Go thy way, for this man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him (1) how great things he must," in his turn, "suffer for my name's sake."

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and laying his hands upon him (2), he said: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me, he that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost (3). And immediately there fell from his eyes as it were

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(1) Although Jesus Christ might have shown it to him in a revelation, yet this word *I will show him* does not at all prove it; it may recur to that fashion of speech in use amongst us, *he shall see* how much he has to suffer. Jesus Christ here glorifies himself because of what St. Paul is to suffer for his sake. This seems to signify: The persecutor shall be persecuted; and, after being so inveterate against me and mine, I shall have the glory of seeing him suffer for my name even more than he made others undergo.

(2) This imposition of hands was not confirmation, as Calvin fancied; Ananias was neither an apostle nor a bishop; and supposing that he had been, he would have given confirmation to Saul *after* and not *before* baptism. It was merely that Saul might be cured of his blindness that Ananias imposed hands upon him, in accordance with the promise of the Saviour to those who should believe in him: *They shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover* (Mark, xvi.).

(3) He received the plenitude thereof in baptism. There is no doubt, however, that being so perfectly converted, he had, with the remission of his sins, received the Holy Ghost, who already dwelt within him as the principle of all sanctity. But in baptism he received a measure still more abundant, being, indeed, equal to that which the apostles received on the day of Pentecost; God, who associated him in their ministry, had decreed that the Holy Ghost should be given to him, as well as to them, without any human agency. In a vocation so extraordinary, nothing need excite surprise.

He says again, as we see in chap. xxii.: *The God of our fathers hath preordained thee that thou shouldst know his will, and see the Just One, and shouldst hear the voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness....of those things which thou hast seen and heard.* This makes it evident that Jesus Christ appeared to him in person, as St. Paul himself says (1 Cor., xv.). It was necessary that all the apostles should be ocular witnesses of his resurrection, so that each of them could say to the world: He is risen, and *I have seen him.*

scales, and he received his sight; and rising up, he was baptized. And when he had taken meat, he was strengthened. And he was with the disciples that were at Damascus for some days."

"And immediately he preached Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. And all that heard him were astonished, and said: Is not this he who persecuted in Jerusalem those that called upon this name; and came hither for that intent that he might carry them bound to the chief priests? But Saul increased much more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, affirming that" Jesus was "the CHRIST."

This great publicity was the splendid reparation due to the honor of Him whom he had so grievously persecuted; and in spreading abroad the history of his conversion, he multiplied the fruit which an example so striking must needs have produced. Having thus acquitted himself of his duty to God and to men, he withdrew from Damascus. St. Luke says nothing of this journey, of which we only find an account in St. Paul's own epistle to the Galatians (*a*). "When it pleased Him," said he, "to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, immediately I condescended not to flesh and blood (1); neither went I to Jerusalem to the apostles who were before me; but I went into Arabia."

It appears by what follows that he made a considerable stay there, perhaps nearly three years. For the rest, we know nothing of what he did while there, as neither he nor any other of the inspired writers says any thing of it. Could it have been unknown, if he had preached the Gospel there, he whose ardent zeal and fervid eloquence were always sure to be effective? Would not the

(*a*) Gal., i. 15.

(1) *I condescended not.* This expression seems to convey that no considerations of flesh and blood were able to deter him from following the divine vocation. But it is plain, from the context, that St. Paul means to say that he received no instruction from any man, being sufficiently enlightened by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Greek word which the Vulgate has rendered by *condescend* approaches much nearer to the meaning here assigned it, for it really signifies *confer*, which reverts again to what Jesus Christ said to St. Peter: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas; for *flesh and blood* hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven;" whence we see clearly that what he congratulates him on is his having learned, not by any human teaching, but by revelation from his heavenly Father, the doctrine which he had just professed.

Christians of Judea have been apprised of it, seeing that their country lay so near Arabia? and if they had known any thing of it would they have been so suspicious of him as they were when, three years after his conversion, he appeared for the first time at Jerusalem? These reflections have given rise to a conjecture which is not without some foundation, viz., that he lived privately while in Arabia, and that God, as he generally does, prepared him for the sacred ministry by the exercises of a solitary life.

"And again," said he, "I returned to Damascus (*a*). And when many days were passed (*b*)" after his conversion, resumes St. Luke (and this interval was the time passed in Arabia), "the Jews," whom he began again to oppose and to confound, "consulted together to kill him." Either deceived by their calumnies, or bribed by their gold, the officer who governed the city for King Aretas (*c*) caused the gates to be guarded, so as to prevent his escape. "But their lying in wait was made known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night, that they might kill him. But the disciples, taking him in the night, conveyed him away by the wall, letting him down in a basket." Thus it was that he escaped from the hands of the governor, and all those who had conspired against him.

Then, and as we have already observed, three years after his conversion, he came for the first time to Jerusalem. His purpose was to see Peter (*d*), with whom he remained fifteen days. Indeed, he saw none of the other apostles, with the exception of James, the brother of the Lord (1). But as his conversion was not yet generally known, or at least well authenticated, "(*e*) the disciples to whom he essayed to join himself were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and told them how he had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken to him; and how in Damascus he had dealt confidently in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going

(*a*) Gal., i. 17. (*b*) Acts, ix. 23. (*c*) 2 Cor., xi. 32.
(*d*) Gal., i. 18, 19. (*e*) Acts, ix. 26.

(1) This was, on the part of St. Paul, a visit of respect which he believed it his duty to pay to him whom Jesus had established as head of his Church; it is very certain that he did not go for the sake of receiving instruction, since Peter's teacher had also been his.

out in Jerusalem, and dealing confidently in the name of the Lord. He spoke also to the Gentiles (1), and disputed with the" Jews who were "Greeks: but they sought to kill him. Which, when the brethren had known, they brought him down to Cesarea, and sent him away to Tarsus." It is to this voyage he alludes when he says that it was then he went into Syria and Cilicia (*a*), of which latter province Tarsus was the capital.

The Jews, enraged at his conversion, had concentrated all their fury against him. When they lost sight of him, they appeared to have forgotten the Church, at least for a time. "Now the Church had peace throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and was edified, walking in the fear of the Lord, and was filled with the consolation of the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER X.

PETER CURES ENEAS, THE PARALYTIC, AT LYDDA, AND AT JOPPA RAISES TABITHA TO LIFE.—AN ANGEL APPEARS TO CORNELIUS, THE CENTURION.—VISION OF ST. PETER.—CORNELIUS, WITH HIS FAMILY, IS INSTRUCTED AND BAPTIZED.

THE time had at last arrived which God had marked out for the full manifestation of the great secret of the vocation of the Gentiles. This had been announced by all the prophets, and clearly indicated by the manner in which even Jesus Christ had spoken of it both before and after his resurrection. Notwithstanding this testimony, so decisive, it was still an impenetrable mystery to every soul of Jewish origin. Not that they absolutely believed salvation to be only reserved for the children of the patriarchs; Peter and John

(*a*) Gal., i. 21.

(1) The Gentile proselytes. It was not yet understood that the Gospel was to be indiscriminately announced to all the Gentiles. This was not fully known until after the admirable vision of St. Peter, and the miraculous effects thereby produced, which shall be related in their proper place.

had received the Samaritans into the Church; Philip, the deacon, had baptized the eunuch of Ethiopia, and the apostles had admitted Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, amongst the deacons. All this was done without any opposition, and as being in the ordinary course of things. It was, therefore, believed that the Gentiles might be incorporated with the Church, but not without having gone through the intermediate form of Judaism. Hence the reproach made to St. Peter for that he had communicated, not precisely with Gentiles, but with the *uncircumcised* (*a*), that is to say, with men who, bearing no mark of the ancient covenant, were considered as debarred from entering upon the new. At length the clouds were all dispersed, and a truth so important to mankind is made manifest to the entire world. It is not, however, to the apostle of nations that the revelation is made, but to the chief of the apostles. This quality, that it might not be an empty title, required that the world should learn this great truth from him. It also appeared necessary that he should throw open the gate of the Gospel to the Gentiles, as he had already done to the Jews, and that his colleagues should not commence to reap either harvest until he had gathered the first fruits thereof. But, in order to secure to him a still greater authority, and also to dispose the Jews for the reception of a doctrine so obnoxious to them, God was pleased to operate, by the ministry of Peter, two signal miracles, immediately before the promulgation of this important truth.

Profiting by the calm in which the Church then was, this vigilant pastor labored to strengthen and to increase his flock. "It came to pass that Peter, as he passed through, visiting all, came to the saints (1) who dwelt at Lydda (2). And he found there a certain

(*a*) Acts, vi. 1.

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(1) The first Christians were frequently styled thus, as we see by many passages in the Epistles of St. Paul. *Christian* and *saint* were then synonymous terms. Unhappily they did not long continue so.

(2) A city of Palestine, not far distant from the Mediterranean Sea. It was subsequently called Diospolis, and was famous for the council held there, in which the errors of Pelagius were condemned. Pelagius had craft enough to screen himself from the condemnation, by subscribing to it, or acknowledging its justice, such dissimulation being

man named Eneas, who had kept his bed for eight years, who was ill of the palsy. Peter," inspired by God, "said to him: Eneas, the Lord Jesus Christ healeth thee; arise, and make thy bed. And immediately he arose. And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him (1):" and "were converted to the Lord." The other miracle was still more striking. "In Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called *Dorcas* (2). This woman was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days that she was sick and died. Whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not be slack to come unto them (3)."

Whether they had made known to him the cause of the deputation being sent, or that he was inspired to go with them, as they had been inspired to ask him, "Peter, rising up, went with them. And when he was come they brought him into the upper chamber, and all the widows stood about him weeping, and showing him the coats and garments which Dorcas made them (4). And they all being put forth, Peter, kneeling down, prayed, and turning to the body, he said: Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and seeing Peter, she sat up. And giving her his hand, he lifted her up. And when he had called the saints and the widows, he presented her alive (5). And it was made known throughout all Joppa, and many

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quite characteristic of heresiarchs, especially while they are engaged in planting the first seeds of their heresy.

(1) It appears that Saron was not the name of a city, but of a district, remarkable for its fertility (as St. Jerome tells us), and, therefore, thickly inhabited.

(2) The Greek name *Dorcas* signifies a goat, as Tabitha does in the Syriac. It is not said whether this woman was married, a widow, or a virgin. Charity sanctifies all states.

(3) The Latin and Greek texts may both signify: Think it no trouble to come; or otherwise: Delay not to come. The interpreters are divided between these two meanings. They have here been taken together.

(4) They testified, says St. Cyprian, not by their mouths, but by the works of Tabitha, the most eloquent of all prayers. Peter could not resist the mute appeal; and how much more touching it was to him, seeing that it was Jesus Christ who, in the person of these widows, had been the object of Tabitha's charity (*Cypr. de Oper. et Eleom.*, c. 2).

(5) It is certain that Tabitha was saved, since she had carried with her to the other world the treasure of her good works and alms-deeds; it has been asked, in consequence,

believed in the Lord. And it came to pass that he abode many days in Joppa, with one Simon, a tanner." The holy fathers take occasion from this circumstance to commend the modesty of Peter, who took up his abode in the house of an artisan at a time when, owing to the stupendous miracle he had just wrought, he might have chosen a dwelling amongst the first houses of the city.

Thence he was to set forth on his journey to make a conquest of the Gentiles, for which great event preparations were already going forward in a neighboring city. (*a*) "There was a certain man in Cesarea, named Cornelius, a centurion of that which is called the Italian band. A religious man, and fearing God with all his house (1),

(*a*) Chap. x., ver. 1.

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whether St. Peter, when he restored her to life, did not do her an injury rather than a service. Let us drop St. Peter, who is here but the instrument, and consider only God, the author of the miracle. *All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth*, says the prophet, and these words should suffice to silence all objections of this nature; even if no other answer were at hand, it would be impious to reject or cavil at this. Yet still it is not forbidden those who content themselves with respectful meditation on the ways of the Lord, to examine the matter for themselves, and in the absence of certainty, to abide by that which is most probable. This is what the theologians do; and they are of opinion that it is very unlikely that God would again expose those who died in the state of grace to the fearful risk of losing their souls. But if it cannot be absolutely said that they become impeccable after their resurrection, yet the Lord secures their salvation by means, the infallible result of which is clearly known to himself; so that, while losing nothing on that side, they gain on the other by the increased merit of a longer life. Not so with those who died in enmity against God. Being restored to life they may attain the state of grace, and persevere therein to the end. Theologians add that judgment might not have been pronounced on these, or that its execution might have been at least suspended, because it is said that *out of hell there is no redemption*, and they all agree that this rule has no exception.

(1) Cornelius was just, even before his conversion to Christianity, since it is of him that St. Peter says (v. 34, 35): "God is not a respecter of persons; but in every nation *he that feareth him, and worketh justice, is acceptable to him.*" The Pelagians concluded from this text that man may become just by the mere exertion of his own free will. Catholic doctors have refuted them by establishing the necessity of a supernatural preventing grace, co-operating in all works, either justifying or meritorious. "But," say they, "if Cornelius were already just, what need had he of the preaching of St. Peter?" The answer is, 1st, That God, according to his usual course of proceeding, rewarded him for the good use of one grace by another still more excellent, whereby perfection was added to justice; and to the sanctity of the natural law, the more sublime holiness of Christianity; 2d, That this additional grace became necessary to him, even for salvation, seeing that ever since the first promulgation of the Gospel, which took place on the

giving much alms to the people (1), and always praying to God." This faithful observer of the natural law, this just man living in the midst of a corrupt world, as did Noah and the ancient patriarchs ere yet the law was written, this was the man whom God had predestined to be the first-fruit of the Gentiles. "This man," being at prayer, "saw in a vision manifestly, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God (2) coming in unto him, and saying to him: Cornelius. And he beholding him, being seized with fear, said: What is it, Lord? And he said to him: Thy prayers and thy alms are ascended for a memorial in the sight of God. And now send men to Joppa, and call hither one Simon, who is surnamed Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side. He will tell thee what thou must do. And when the angel who spoke to him was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a soldier who feared the Lord, of them that were under him. To whom, when he had related all, he sent them to Joppa."

"And on the next day, whilst they were going on their journey, and drawing nigh to the city, Peter went up to the higher parts of the house, to pray, about the sixth hour (3). And being hungry,

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day of Pentecost, there was no chance of salvation without explicit faith in Jesus Christ; that the bare possibility of the Gentiles being called had been hitherto rejected, for which reason Cornelius was justified in not having embraced the Jewish religion; but that now this great mystery was on the point of being fully revealed, as it was, in his person, by a distinction glorious to him, God wished to pay a manifest tribute of honor to his virtues.

(1) He was not yet a Christian by faith, but he was by his works, and to these God was pleased very soon to add the light of faith. How many Christians in faith are pagan in their works, wherefore they are speedily punished by the total loss of faith!

(2) Theologians say that if a Gentile had faithfully observed the natural law, God would send an angel to enlighten him rather than leave him to perish for want of the knowledge necessary to his salvation. The example of Cornelius is a proof of this, strengthened, moreover, by that saying of St. Augustine, which has passed into an axiom: *God refuses not his grace to him who does what he can.*

It has been already remarked that in Palestine the roofs of the houses were flat, and Peter went up there to pray with greater recollection. This practice he had learned from his divine Master, who was in the habit of retiring to some mountain to pray.

(3) About noon Cornelius prayed at the ninth hour, that is to say, about three in the afternoon. He did this in imitation of the Jews, who consecrated to prayer the first, the third, the sixth, and the ninth hours of the day. Hence the names of *prime, terce, sexte,* and *nones,* which have passed into the Christian church, and been retained by her.

he was desirous to taste somewhat. And as they were preparing, there came upon him an ecstasy of mind. And he saw the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great linen sheet (1), let down by the four corners from heaven to the earth. Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things of the earth, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him: Arise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said: Far be it from me; for I never did eat any thing that is common and unclean (2). And the voice spoke to him again the second time: That which God hath cleansed, do not thou call common. And this was done thrice (3); and presently the vessel was taken up into heaven."

"Now whilst Peter was doubting within himself what the vision that he had seen should mean, behold the men who were sent from Cornelius, inquiring for Simon's house, stood at the gate. And when they had called, they asked if Simon, who is surnamed Peter, were lodged there. And as Peter was thinking of the vision, the Spirit said to him: Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore, get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them. Then Peter, going down to the men, said: Behold, I am he whom you seek; what is the cause for which you are come? Who said: Cornelius, a centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and having good testimony from all the nation of the Jews, received an answer of a holy angel to send for thee into his house,

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(1) This sheet represented the Church, which was to receive into its bosom the Gentiles, whom the Jews regarded as unclean and abominable. The Church comes from heaven, and is to return thither: hence the descending and ascending of the sheet. Many interpreters think that *all* the animals it contained were unclean. Others assert that it had both clean and unclean. There is nothing in the text to decide for or against. What appears certain from St. Peter's reply is, either that all the animals were unclean, or that he understood the voice as commanding him to eat indiscriminately of both.

(2) God made use of this figure because, independent of the vocation of the Gentiles, which was its principal object, he wished to show that the distinction between clean and unclean beasts, so strictly enjoined by the old law, was abolished by the new. Some have even thought that this line of distinction was effaced from the very time of the Messiah.

(3) The three repetitions were apparently for the purpose of assuring St. Peter that the celestial vision was no illusion. They also represented the invocation of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, and the three baptismal immersions by means of which the Gentiles were to enter the Church.

and to hear words of thee. Then bringing them in, he lodged them. And the day following he arose and went with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the morrow after" his departure, "he entered into Cesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, having called together his kinsmen and special friends (1). And it came to pass that when Peter was come in, Cornelius," being apprised by one of his messengers who had hastened on in advance of the others (2), "came to meet him, and falling at his feet, adored. But Peter lifted him up, saying: Arise, I myself also am a man (3). And talking with him, he went in" to his house, where he "found many that were come together. And he said to them: You know how abominable it is for a man that is a Jew to keep company or to come unto one of another nation. But God hath showed to me to call no man common or unclean (4). For which cause, making no doubt, I came when I was sent for. I ask, therefore, for what cause you have sent for me?"

The messengers sent to Joppa had already made this known to him; but it was only proper that he should learn it from Cornelius himself, and therefore had he put the question. "Cornelius said: Four days ago, unto this hour, I was praying in my house, at the ninth hour, and behold a man (5) stood before me in white apparel, and said: Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thy alms are had in

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(1) He had already sanctified his house. Behold him now laboring to sanctify his friends and neighbors. Can a soldier, then, be an apostle? Yes, if he be a saint: sanctity produces zeal in every state.

(2) The circumstance of the servant hurrying on to apprise his master of the coming of St. Peter, is, in itself, very likely. Besides, it is found, word for word, in an ancient Greek manuscript, wherein it constitutes a part of the text.

(3) It was not because Cornelius took him for a god that St. Peter thus addressed him. Cornelius was already too enlightened to be capable of such an error, since he had not mistaken the angel who appeared to him in the lustre of glory for other than the ambassador of God. But he regarded St. Peter as an extraordinary man, whom he was bound to accost with all possible reverence. This was the homage which St. Peter's humility rejected, though it was only the respect due to his exalted dignity.

(4) Peter had already understood that the beasts contained in the sheet represented all men, and that all that had since passed had been revealed to him in his vision: the rest will shortly be explained.

(5) *A man,* that is to say, an angel who appeared to him under the figure of a man; for his was not a spiritual vision, but a corporal and sensible apparition.

remembrance in the sight of God (1). Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, who is surnamed Peter. He lodgeth in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea-side. Immediately, therefore, I sent to thee; and thou hast done well in coming. Now, therefore, all we are present in thy sight, to hear all things whatsoever are commanded thee by the Lord. And Peter, opening his mouth, said: In very deed I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh justice, is acceptable to him."

They who had been acknowledged as agreeable to God could no longer be considered unworthy of knowing Jesus Christ. He is, therefore, to be announced unto them, and the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile is no longer to exist. "God," continues Peter, "sent the word to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all). You know the word which hath been published through all Judea; for it began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached. Jesus of Nazareth; how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him (2). And we are witnesses of all things that he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem," that Jesus "whom they killed, hanging him upon a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people (3),

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(1) As often as it is said that his prayers have been heard, his alms are also mentioned. This is to teach us that his prayers derived their chief efficacy from his almsdeeds. They who unite these two means have found the infallible secret of touching the heart of God.

(2) *God was with him* in the sense of unity of person. This explanation is given because Nestorius abused this text and some others of a similar kind, for the purpose of designating two persons in Jesus Christ—the person of God who was with Jesus Christ, and the person of Jesus Christ with whom God was. It is true that unity of persons is not here expressed, but neither is it gainsayed, and that is enough to establish the force of those texts which do express it.

This Catholic doctrine is the combination of several distinct texts. He who separates them has but a portion of the truth, and if he deny the remainder he is wholly in error.

(3) And why not to all the people? demands the unbeliever. God had his own reasons for this. But, even had Jesus Christ appeared after his resurrection to all the people, the incredulous would not yet have believed. Lazarus risen from the dead had been seen by all the people; and the only effect produced by the miracle in the minds of

but to witnesses preordained by God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose again from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead (1). To him all the prophets give testimony, that by his name all receive remission of sins who believe in him (2)."

"While Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Ghost," whose invincible action accompanied his words, "fell on all them that heard the word (3). And the faithful of the circumci-

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these perverse men was to inspire them with the design of putting him to death. *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead* (St. Luke, xvi.).

(1) *Judge of the living and of the dead.* The same expression is found in the creed. Its precise meaning has not yet been clearly determined. By the living and the dead, some understand the just and the wicked. Others, explaining *the dead* in its literal sense, understand by *the living* those who, being still alive when Jesus Christ shall come to judge the world, shall die, in fulfilment of the common law, and instantly rise again to receive their sentence. Their brief subjection to the power of death may cause them to be distinguished from the other dead by the name of *living*.

We venture to hazard a third explanation, and it is so simple that it might well be the true one. By the dead we understand those who are already dead, and by the living those who are still alive. Thus, when it is said that Christ shall come to judge the living and the dead, the meaning is that he shall judge those who have gone before us to the grave, and we who shall have passed away in our turn, but are now living on the earth: in a word, that Jesus Christ shall judge all men who have ever existed; for the proposition will be literally true even till the end of the world, because ever until then there will be men in existence who can say: Jesus Christ shall judge us who now live on the earth, and all those who have gone before us. We have said that we merely venture on this explanation; yet we find some foundation for it in those words of St. Paul (1 Thess. iv., 15, 16): *The dead who are in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, &c.* Let us pass over the obscurity of this passage, and pause only at the words: *The dead shall rise first, then we who are alive.* We here see in unequivocal terms, the resurrection, and the consequent judgment of the living and the dead. The living are evidently those who were alive when the apostle wrote his epistle, that is to say, they are called *living* in the sense of our explanation, which has undeniably some support in this saying of St. Paul.

(2) At the same time that he is declared judge, he is also declared as Saviour, to teach us how we ought both to love and fear him.

(3) They had received the sanctifying grace prior to their baptism, which happens as often as the dispositions brought to this sacrament are perfected by charity. So it is with regard to the sacrament of penance. They had even received the effect of confirmation together with the sensible and miraculous gifts by which it was accompanied in those early times. God, who made this rule, is in no way bound to follow it; and there

sion (1), who came with Peter, were astonished, for that the grace of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they heard them speaking with tongues, and magnifying God." This last prodigy was the full manifestation of the divine secret. Peter understood this, and seeing in it at the same time the complete refutation of the Jewish prejudice, he "answered: Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then they desired him to tarry with them some days." He willingly acceded to their wishes, and there can be no doubt that he availed himself of the opportunity to give them further instruction. It is probable that on leaving them he consigned them to the care of Cornelius, whom he subsequently established as bishop of Cesarea, in which see he succeeded Zacheus, as we learn from the Roman martyrology, wherein Cornelius is commemorated as a saint on the 2d of February. His house was converted into a church, which was still devoutly visited in the time of St. Jerome.

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was a good reason for setting it aside on this occasion, since it was this last miracle which completed the proof of the Gentiles' vocation.

(1) Hence there were even then believers who were uncircumcised. Such is the inference drawn by some commentators, but it appears that they are mistaken. If there had been any uncircumcised Christians, wherefore did it require so many prodigies to persuade St. Peter that the uncircumcised might be admitted to baptism? The *faithful of the circumcision* are, therefore, not distinguished here from the *uncircumcised believers*, but from the circumcised *unbelievers*, viz., those Jews who had not embraced the faith of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XI.

PETER SHOWS CAUSE FOR HIS CONDUCT.—PREACHING OF BARNABAS AND SAUL AT ANTIOCH, WHERE THE NAME OF CHRISTIAN IS FIRST GIVEN TO THE FAITHFUL.

"(*a*) And the apostles and brethren, who were in Judea, heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him. Saying: Why didst thou go in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them? But Peter began and declared to them the matter in order, saying: I was in the city of Joppa praying, and I saw in an ecstasy of mind a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners, and it came even unto me. Into which looking I considered, and saw four-footed creatures of the earth, and beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And I heard also a voice saying to me: Arise, Peter, kill and eat. And I said: Not so, Lord, for nothing common or unclean hath ever entered my mouth. And the voice answered again from heaven: What God hath made clean do not thou call common. And this was done three times, and all were taken up again into heaven. And behold, immediately there were three men come to the house wherein I was, sent to me from Cesarea. And the Spirit said to me that I should go with them, nothing doubting. And these six brethren went with me also; and we entered into the man's house. And he told us how he had seen an angel in his house, standing and saying to him: Send to Joppa, and call hither Simon, who is surnamed Peter, who shall speak to thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved (1), and all thy house. And when I had begun to speak, the Holy Ghost fell upon them, as upon us also in the beginning. And I remembered the word of

(*a*) Chap. xi., ver. 1.

(1) The angel had previously told him: *Thy prayer is heard*; which, conjointly with this, proves to us that it was salvation for which he had asked, or, what is all the same, the means of obtaining it.

the Lord, now that he said: *John indeed baptized with water* (1), *but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.* If then God gave them the same grace (2), as to us also who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that could withstand God?"

The ancients have justly commended St. Peter for not having exerted his authority on this occasion, and for having condescended to justify his conduct to his inferiors. When people have to deal with captious persons, who have always something to object, even against the truth itself, then recourse must be had to authority, as they could never otherwise be silenced; but treating with those who love the truth, and desire only to know it, the best course is to reason calmly with them. Authority becomes more persuasive, and submission less painful. They to whom Peter spoke were of the latter class. Hence, "having heard these things, they held their peace; and glorified God, saying: God then hath also to the Gentiles given repentance (3) unto life."

This auspicious commencement failed not to have still more encouraging effects. "Now they who had been dispersed by the persecution that arose on occasion of Stephen, went about as far as Phenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none but to the Jews only. But some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who when they were entered into Antioch, spoke also to the Greeks (4), preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord

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(1) The baptism of Christ is also a baptism of water; but that of John was nothing more, whereas that of Jesus Christ confers the Holy Ghost.

(2) This reasoning of St. Peter was unanswerable. It was plain that Cornelius and his household had received the *grace* of the sacrament—why should they be refused the *sign* thereof?

(3) This is, in a word, salvation, designated by the eternal life which is its term, and by the penance which is its means. How can he who embraces not the means hope to arrive at the desired end?

(4) *To the Greeks,* that is to say, to the Gentiles, and not to the Jews born amongst the Greeks, which appears from the distinction here made between these Greeks and the Jews. Were these new preachers then informed of the conversion of Cornelius, or did they but follow the impulse of the Holy Ghost, urging them interiorly to continue the work which he had commenced at Cesarea? On this point we are entirely at a loss, and it is, in any case, of small importance. What appears more than probable is, that the Gospel was not preached to the Gentiles until after the conversion of Cornelius.

was with them; and a great number believing was converted to the Lord."

The enterprise would have been sufficiently justified by its success, even if it had not already been by the conversion of Cornelius. But after that event, the vocation of the Gentiles was no longer a problem; wherefore "the tidings came to the ears of the Church that was at Jerusalem, touching these things: and they sent Barnabas as far as Antioch," to confirm the work already commenced, and, if necessary, to help it forward.

The seed was already sowed, and it only remained to preserve and multiply it. Barnabas, "when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, rejoiced, and," finding that he had nothing more to do, "he exhorted them all with purpose of heart to continue in" the service of "the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." His preaching, seconded by the sanctity of his life, produced the fruits which might be expected. "And a great multitude was" again "added to the Lord."

A harvest so abundant demanded new laborers, and the first-fruits of the Gentiles seemed to cry aloud from all parts of the earth for him whom God had appointed to gather them in. Whether it was that Barnabas saw this, or that God had revealed it to him, he "went to Tarsus to seek Saul: whom when he had found, he brought to Antioch. And they conversed there in the Church a whole year; and they taught a great multitude, so that at Antioch the disciples were first named Christians (1)."

Attracted by the rumor of this success, and wishing to see it with their own eyes—perhaps ambitious of helping it on—"In those days there came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them,

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(1) This name has remained. The virtues which it implies are still found in some of those who bear it; but in the greater number it does but render more glaring and more criminal the contrast between their actual vices and those virtues which they ought to have.

Julian the apostate published an edict suppressing the name of Christians, which he changed into that of Galileans. He feared that name, says one of the fathers, even as the demons fear it. However that might be, he showed himself lamentably void of good sense, for though things may well depend on princes, yet with names they have nothing to do.

named Agabus, rising up, signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over the whole world, which came to pass under Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, purposed to send relief to the brethren who dwelt in Judea (1): which also they did, sending it to the ancients by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

CHAPTER XII.

JAMES THE BROTHER OF JOHN IS PUT TO DEATH BY HEROD.—PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON BY AN ANGEL.—DEATH OF HEROD.

From the baptism of Cornelius till the events recorded in this chapter, that is to say, within the space of about seven years, many remarkable events took place which the sacred author of this history has not been inspired to write, but which have, nevertheless, come down to us by constant tradition, supported by the testimony of the gravest historians of the Church. Such is the dispersion of the apostles, who, at length assured of the vocation of the Gentiles, carried the light of the Gospel to the furthest extremities of the then known world. They had previously composed the Creed, which still bears their name, and this precaution was indispensable in order that their teaching might be everywhere exactly the same. The opinion that each one of the twelve composed an article (which seems to be implied by the very name of the Creed), is so ancient and so well authenticated, that it cannot be disputed without the greatest temerity. When about to quit Judea, St. Matthew left to

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(1) There were two reasons for the extraordinary dearth of provisions amongst the faithful of Judea: 1st, They had given up all their possessions, which the Gentile Christians had not done. 2d, The Gentile converts were not yet persecuted by their idolatrous brethren, as the Jewish Christians were by the unbelievers of their nation.

Since the famine was to be universal, avarice would have said: Think of ourselves, that we may not die of hunger whilst we nourish strangers. Charity says, on the contrary: Let us run all risks rather than leave our brethren in distress.

his countrymen his Gospel, which he had written in their own tongue. The original is no longer to be found, and the Greek, which now holds its place, is but a faithful translation made in those early times. It would seem that God chose to withdraw it from the Jews, who had rendered it useless by their incredulity. It was about the same time that St. Peter established his principal see at Antioch. In order to do that, there was no need of his going there in person; he went, however, but not to make it his permanent abode, for he still continued to visit those cities or provinces where his presence was found useful or necessary. He and his colleagues returned to Jerusalem either when the wants of the Church required their personal superintendence, or that the course of their evangelical missions brought them within a short distance of it. This remark is here made because it has a close connection with what follows.

The unbridled fury wherewith the Jews pursued the disciples appeared to be somewhat more cautious with regard to the apostles, the latter being the objects of a deeper and more concentrated hatred. "At the same time (1)," says the sacred writer, "Herod the king (2) stretched forth his hands to afflict some of the Church." As its chiefs were the principal objects of his vengeance, "he killed James (3) the brother of John with the sword. And seeing that

(1) The events here spoken of took place about ten years after the ascension of our Saviour. Hence, *at the same time* can only have reference to the time of the famine, the prediction of which is the last thing spoken of by St. Luke.

(2) Herod Agrippa, a different person from the Herod who beheaded St. John the Baptist, and distinguished also from that Agrippa before whom St. Paul pleaded his cause. The former was his paternal uncle, and the latter his son. This prince had no power in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, he was allowed to exercise authority over the people of his own household, since we find that he caused St. Peter's guards to be put to the torture; and also over the Galileans, his own subjects, to which nation belonged the two apostles, one of whom he beheaded, and imprisoned the other. This also was the reason why Pilate paid him the compliment of sending Jesus to him for judgment as soon as he heard of his being a Galilean.

(3) One of the sons of Zebedee, he who is styled James *the major*. He was one of the three disciples whom Jesus regarded with special affection; and he was also the first of the apostles who had the honor of shedding his blood for his Master's sake—a distinction much more enviable than that which he, in his human blindness, had desired to attain. His body, which was conveyed to Spain, has ever been the object of pious pilgrimages from all parts of the Catholic world.

it pleased the Jews (1), he proceeded to take up Peter also. Now it was in the days of the azymes. When he had apprehended him, he cast him into prison, delivering him to four files of soldiers to be kept, intending after the pasch to bring him forth to the people. Peter, therefore, was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him." This was the only defence which God permitted him to make against oppression, and the result shows how efficacious it was. "And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by him: and a light shined in the room, and he, striking Peter on the side, raised him up, saying: Arise quickly. And the chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said to him: Gird thyself, and put on thy sandals. And he did so. And he said to him: Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And going out he followed him, and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. And passing through the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate that leadeth to the city (2), which of itself opened to them. And going out, they passed on through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And Peter, coming to himself, said: Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

Left to himself, it behooved him to think of seeking an asylum

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(1) Pilate allowed Jesus to be crucified because he feared the people. Herod, in order to please the people, caused James to be beheaded, and resolved on a similar punishment for Peter. They were both murderers: the first because he was a pusillanimous man, and the other because he was a sycophant. How was it that their mere weakness made them both so cruel?

If the people are often flatterers of princes, they, in their turn, are often flatterers of the people.

(2) Translators say, *the town*. It is inferred from thence that this prison was without the walls of the town. It might be so, it is true; but it might also be that Jerusalem, like some of our great modern cities, had one district especially called *the city*. There is even some probability that such was the case. Moreover, the Latin and Greek words both signify more literally *the city*. It has, therefore, been chosen with a view to leave the matter undecided, as the sacred text has done.



THE DELIVERANCE OF ST PETER.

wherein he might be sheltered from pursuit. "And considering, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, where many were gathered together and praying. And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, whose name was Rhoda. And as soon as she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for joy, but running in she told that Peter stood before the gate. But they said to her: Thou art mad. But she affirmed that it was so. Then said they: It is his angel (1). But Peter continued knocking. And when they had opened, they saw him, and were astonished. But he, beckoning to them with his hand to hold their peace, told how the Lord had brought him out of prison, and he said: Tell these things to James (2) and to the brethren. And going out, he went into another place (3)."

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(1) This text has been already of good service in proving the Catholic doctrine that each individual has his guardian angel. Calvin, seeing plainly that it was conclusive against him, endeavored to evade it by admitting that St. Peter had a guardian angel while in prison, but no more. How knew he this? or rather, how did they know it who, believing it impossible that Peter could be at the gate, said that it must be his angel? Will Protestants say that God sent another angel to reveal it to them? What senseless folly! Let us speak always according to faith, and we shall be sure to have reason on our side. These people, then, said: *It is his angel*, simply because the first Christians were persuaded that each has his guardian angel.

This word: *It is his angel*, shows us further that these early Christians believed that the angels sometimes assumed the appearance of those over whom they watched: such, too, is the opinion of some theologians. These last found their assertion on the fact that many of the saints, during their mortal lives, were seen at the same time in different places, without being themselves aware of the reduplication of their presence. Hence it has been reasonably concluded that these saints were not made present in body or in soul, but that it was their angel appearing under their likeness, or otherwise that God was pleased to form a body of inanimate air, giving to it the features and the voice of the person so represented. This is a matter, however, which could only be decided by his own special revelation.

(2) James *the less*, bishop of Jerusalem, he who is called in Scripture the brother of our Lord. It is still debated amongst the learned whether he was the same as James the son of Alpheus, one of the twelve apostles, or whether they were two different persons. The common opinion, and that which is adopted by the Church, is, that they were but one and the same individual.

(3) *In another place* appears to signify that he went to conceal himself in another house. Some give the expression a wider meaning, because that in reality St. Peter hastened to quit Jerusalem, whence, after visiting several provinces, he repaired to Rome, leaving Evodius his successor in the episcopacy of Antioch and in the patriarchate of the East, and taking with him his primacy, which he irrevocably attached to the Roman see,

"When the day was come, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, having examined the keepers, he commanded they should be put to death. And going down from Judea to Cesarea, he abode there."

There it was that he was to fill up the measure of his iniquity, and receive the reward of his crimes. "He was angry with the Tyrians and the Sidonians, but they, with one accord, came to him, and having gained Blastus, who was the king's chamberlain, they desired peace, because their countries were nourished by him. And upon a day appointed, Herod, being arrayed in kingly apparel, sat in the judgment-seat, and made an oration to them. And the people made acclamation, saying: It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And forthwith an angel of the Lord struck him, because he had not given the honor to God, and being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost (1)."

Meantime, the blood which he had shed fructified and enriched the Church. "The word of the Lord increased and multiplied. And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem" to Antioch, "having fulfilled their ministry, taking with them John, who was surnamed Mark."

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founded by him towards the close of that year, which was the tenth after the Ascension of Our Lord.

(1) Humble yourself, O man! for you shall soon die, and your flesh shall then be devoured by worms! And you, princes! bow down even to the earth; lest, allowing yourselves to be intoxicated by flattery, you should become the living prey of worms. Such things have occurred in other instances besides that of the unhappy Herod.

Any mortal who takes pleasure in hearing himself styled more than human is as guilty as Herod, or perhaps more guilty still.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HOLY GHOST DECREES THAT BARNABAS AND SAUL SHALL BE CHOSEN FOR THE WORK OF PREACHING TO THE GENTILES.—THE MAGICIAN BAR-JESU IS STRUCK BLIND AT THE BIDDING OF PAUL.—CONVERSION OF SERGIUS PAULUS.—ADDRESS OF PAUL TO THE SYNAGOGUE OF ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA.—BLASPHEMY OF THE JEWS.—PERSECUTION EXCITED BY THEM.—CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES.

(*a*) "Now there were in the Church which was at Antioch, prophets (1) and doctors, among whom was Barnabas, and Simon, who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manahen, who was the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they were ministering to the Lord (2), and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Saul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying (3), and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away."

(*a*) Chap. xiii. 1.

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(1) *Prophets* who spoke by inspiration, and foretold what was to come, such as Agabus, of whom mention is made in chap. ii. and xxi.; *doctors* who expounded the sacred Scripture, according as it was read. Both the office and the name are preserved in the Greek Church, so that the title of *doctor* (or teacher) *of the Gospel* is given to him whose duty it is to explain the Gospel; *doctor of the apostle* to him who expounds the epistles of St. Paul; *doctor of the psalter* to the expounder of the Psalms, which also corresponds with our teachers of divinity, or theologians, except that, as M. Fleury remarks, the *actual* duty of the theologian is confined to the production of some sermons which he is not even obliged to compose himself.

(2) The Greek version has *the liturgy*, of which the literal meaning is, *the public office* (*action*). This word, in its general signification, means *divine service*. By the Greeks it is more especially used to signify sacrifice. So also is it understood in this text by many commentators.

(3) It will again be seen in the following chapter (ver. 22), that the ordination was accompanied by fasting and prayer; a practice which commenced with the very existence of the Church, and which has been perpetuated even to the present time.

But was this really an ordination, or was it merely an imposition of hands, purely deprecatory? This is a question on which commentators have not yet agreed. The probability is that it was an ordination, since we find nothing wanting of all the usual forms which precede and accompany ordination; fasting, prayer, even sacrifice itself, nor yet the imposition of hands. But it may be said that St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, declares that he received nothing from men, as far as the knowledge of religion

"So they, being sent by the Holy Ghost," whose guidance they followed, as they had from him received their mission, the two apostles "went to Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were come to Salamina, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John also in their ministry. And when they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a certain man a magician, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesu, who was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, a prudent man (1). He, sending for Barnabas and Saul, desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas, the magician (2) (for so his name is interpreted) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith. Then" (and here it is that the apostle of nations appears for the first time in his true character) "Saul, otherwise Paul (3), filled with the Holy Ghost, looking upon him, said: O full of all guile, and of all deceit, child of the devil, enemy of all justice, thou ceasest not to pervert the right ways of

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and his vocation to the apostolate were concerned, yet we know that he received baptism from Ananias, and might just as well have received the sacerdotal and episcopal orders by the ordinary ministration. Thus a priest who is raised to the papacy receives nothing, *as supreme pontiff*, from the bishop who administered to him the episcopal consecration. From him he received his episcopal dignity; from the clergy of Rome, by whom he was elected, he is made bishop of Rome, but from God alone he holds his office as Pope of the universal Church, because of the order established by God that the successor of Peter in the see of Rome should succeed to his primacy.

(1) This prudence, which was in him no more than a moral quality, could not merit the gift of faith, but it set aside the obstacles which might have impeded its growth. It is by the grace of God that man is faithful, as it is by his own folly that he is not.

(2) Elymas does not signify a magician either in Greek or in Hebrew, and this has puzzled many interpreters. Still we must conclude that the word has had such a meaning, since St. Luke expressly says so. He alluded, it would seem, to some particular language—now no longer known. It might have been the ancient language of the Cyprians before the language of Greece prevailed in Cyprus. This is nearly the whole amount of what has been said on the subject.

(3) Henceforward he shall only be called Paul. It is more than probable that it was at this time he adopted that new name, and for this reason, that the Gentiles, to whom he was more especially sent, might be less unwilling to receive him, when he had a name to which their ears were accustomed. But did he take this name of himself, or at the request of the proconsul Sergius Paulus, or was it that the Gentiles, because of the resemblance of the two names, unwittingly changed Saul into Paul? All these suppositions are possible, but the only thing certain is, that the apostle did adopt the name, and never after gave himself any other.

the Lord. And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a time. And immediately there fell a mist and darkness upon him, and, going about, he sought some one to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul, when he had seen what was done, believed, admiring the doctrine of the Lord (1)."

"Now when Paul and they that were with him had sailed from Paphos, they came to Perge, in Pamphylia. And John," shrinking from a task so full of toil and danger, had not the courage to follow them. He, "departing from them, returned to Jerusalem. But they, passing through Perge, came to Antioch in Pisidia; and entering into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, they sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue," according to the usual practice with regard to strangers, "sent to them, saying: Ye men, brethren, if you have any word of exhortation to make to the people, speak. Then Paul, rising up, and with his hands bespeaking silence, said: Ye men of Israel, and you that fear God (2), give ear. The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people (3), when they were sojourners in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought them out from thence. And for the space of forty years endured their" unruly "manners in the desert. And destroying seven nations in the land of Chanaan, divided their land among them, by lot, as it

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(1) This word expresses at once the doctrine and the manner in which St. Paul had proved it. Thus, when Jesus Christ drove out a devil by the power of his word: "they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying: What is this new *doctrine?* (Mark, i. 27). For with power he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." The evangelical doctrine, when simply proposed, appears at a first glance sublime in its mysteries and perfect in its morality. A doubt may then arise whether it be from God, or is merely a beautiful conception of the human mind. The miracle by which it is proved must at once establish its divinity, and then the mind, freed from the embarrassment of doubt, yields itself entirely to admiration. Hence it was said that the proconsul, *having seen the miracle, admired the doctrine.*

(2) Besides those who were Jews, or Israelites by birth, they admitted into those assemblies proselytes and Gentile worshippers of the true God. It was to them that reference was made in the words: *You that fear God.*

(3) He exalted that people, and made their name famous, by the ten plagues wherewith he struck their cruel oppressors.

were, after four hundred and fifty years (1). And after these things he gave unto them judges, until Samuel the prophet. And after that they desired a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, forty years (2). And when he had removed him, he raised them up David to be king, to whom, giving testimony, he said: *I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man according to my own heart, who shall do all my wills.* Of this man's seed God, according to his promise, hath raised up to Israel a Saviour, Jesus. John first preaching before his coming the baptism of penance to all the people of Israel. And when John was fulfilling his course, he said: I am not he whom you think me to be: but behold there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose (3). Men, brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fear God, to you the word of this salvation is sent. For they that inhabit Jerusalem, and the rulers thereof, not knowing him, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, judging him have fulfilled them. And finding no cause of death in him, they desired of Pilate that they might kill him. And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, taking him down from the tree, they laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him up from the dead the third day: who was seen for many days by them who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who to this present are his witnesses to the people. And

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(1) Between the birth of Isaac (which may be considered the origin of the chosen people), and the division by lot of the land of Chanaan, there is commonly reckoned four hundred and fifty years. Nearly all the commentators agree in saying that this was the period to which St. Paul here alludes.

(2) These forty years included the time of the government of Samuel, and the reign of Saul.

(3) Many years subsequent to the death of John the Baptist, and far away from Judea, where he had lived and died, St. Paul quotes his testimony in support of the divinity of Jesus Christ. This shows how far the fame of the holy precursor had spread, and how highly he was esteemed by the Jews all over the world. He is also quoted by the apostle St. John, in his Gospel, which was written more than fifty years after the precursor's death: another fact which proves that his testimony was deeply and indelibly impressed upon the minds of men. Doubtless all this tended to give weight and value to his evidence, but it was also supported by the fulfilment of the prophecies in him, since it had been foretold that the Messiah should be preceded by a prophet who would announce his approach, and prepare the way before him.

we declare unto you that the promise which was made to our fathers, this same God hath fulfilled to our children, raising up Jesus, as in the second Psalm also is written: *Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee* (1). And to show that he raised him up from the dead not to return now any more to corruption, he said thus: *I will give you the holy things of David faithful.* And therefore, in another place also he saith: *Thou shalt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.*"

It was not David in person, but the Messiah, his Lord and his son, who was the object of these magnificent promises. "For David, when he had served in his generation according to the will of God, slept; and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. But he whom God hath raised from the dead saw no corruption. Be it known therefore to you, men, brethren, that through him forgiveness of sins is preached to you; and from all the things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. In him every one that believeth is justified."

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(1) St. Paul (Heb., i. 5) explains this text by the eternal generation of the Word. This is, in fact, its natural and literal meaning. Here he applies it to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which application is accounted for in various ways: 1st, It is explained as referring to the manifestation of the eternal generation, because that, in raising up his Son, God seems to have said to the entire universe: This is my Son, whom I have begotten from all eternity; you will recognize him by this prodigy. 2d, Others understand it as having reference to the resurrection itself, which in Scripture is often called regeneration. Hence the words: *This day have I begotten thee*, signify *I have regenerated thee*, that is to say, this day have I given thee a new birth. 3d, Though still preserving the literal meaning of this text, which is assuredly that of the eternal generation, many persons have applied it both to the incarnation and resurrection, and they do it in this way. By the personal union of the Word with human nature, a man was made the child of God, and in this sense God might say to that man: Thou art my son, and this day have I begotten thee. That man was no longer in existence after the death of Jesus Christ (notwithstanding that his two distinctive parts were each in existence, and that the Word still remained united thereto), so that there was no longer any man who could be called the begotten son of God. But this man having been re-made, if one may so express it, by the reunion of his parts, there was again in existence one to whom God might say on the day of the resurrection, as on that of the incarnation: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. St. Paul appears to have connected these two meanings in commencing the epistle to the Romans, where, after saying that the Son of God *was made to him of the seed of David, according to the flesh*, he adds, *who was predestinated the Son of God . . . by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead* (Rom., i. ver. 3, 4).

To these inducements, attractive as they were, the apostle, in order to suit every disposition, adds some threats of an alarming nature. "Beware, therefore," says he, "lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets: *Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you will not believe if any man shall tell it you.*"

These words occur in the prophecy of Habacuc. The work of which he speaks is the invasion of the promised land by the Chaldeans, and the ravages therein made by those fierce instruments of divine vengeance. St. Paul, who had to threaten his auditors with scourges still more dreadful, contents himself with intimating the latter by recalling the former, which were only signs and figures of those to come. His discourse was not without some fruit. "As they went out, they desired them that on the next Sabbath they would speak unto them these words. And when the synagogue was broken up, many of the Jews, and of the strangers who served God, followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God."

"The next Sabbath-day the whole city almost came together to hear the word of God. And the Jews, seeing the multitudes, were filled with envy, and contradicted those things which were said by Paul, blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas said boldly: To you it behooved us first to speak the word of God (1); but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord hath commanded us: *I have set thee to be the light of the Gentiles; that thou mayst be for salvation unto the utmost part of the earth.*"

"And the Gentiles, hearing it, were glad, and glorified the word

(1) It was decreed by God that the Gospel should first be announced to the Jews. St. Paul acts in conformity with this decree, though he elsewhere says that the apostolate of the nations was especially confided to him, as that of the Jewish people was to St. Peter. Neither one nor the other was without exception, since St. Paul here announces the Gospel to the Jews, as we have seen St. Peter announce it to the Gentiles. Neither mission was the sole duty of either apostle, but only the principal part thereof.

Those who would fain have St. Peter inferior to St. Paul in dignity, because of these different missions, so unequal in their importance, do not seem to remember that Jesus Christ is called minister of the circumcision, or yet the declaration made by himself that his mission was only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

of the Lord; and as many as were ordained (1) to life everlasting, believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout the whole country"

The incredulous Jews could not bear this, and, being defeated in argument, they strove to prevail by intrigue. "The Jews stirred up religious and honorable women (2), and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their coasts. But they, shaking off the dust of their feet against them, came to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost."

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(1) The Greek says simply, *destined*. The meaning is, however, the same. Many of the commentators think that it does not at all refer to predestination, properly so called. They can hardly believe that St. Luke was inspired to make known to these people that they were all predestined; and, moreover, it is very probable that many others, who did not at first believe, did subsequently embrace the faith, since it is written that "the word of the Lord was published throughout the whole country." The *præordinati* (ordained) therefore, of this text, is understood as having reference to the disposition to faith, which consists chiefly in a sincere love of truth, together with the efficacious desire of knowing it. Nor does grace thereby lose any of its prerogatives, seeing that this disposition is still its work; and there are numerous other texts which prove beyond all doubt the doctrine of predestination.

(2) In Latin, *honestas*. This word may be understood of virtuous conduct as well as of condition. The Greek word of which it is a translation is also susceptible of the same interpretation. The two apostles, on leaving the town, shook the dust off their feet against these women, and those who took part with them. Jesus Christ had commanded his disciples to do so (Matt., x. 14), and he subjoined this fearful threat: *Amen, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city.* Thus, by a wicked infatuation in regard to religion, those women, though regular in their conduct, and seemingly devout, are condemned, and treated with greater rigor than the most abominable of mankind. This is matter of faith.

CHAPTER XIV.

JEWS AND GENTILES CONVERTED IN ICONIUM.—A CRIPPLE IS CURED IN LYSTRA.—THE TWO APOSTLES ARE THERE TAKEN FOR GODS.—NEXT DAY PAUL IS STONED, AND LEFT FOR DEAD.—HE RETURNS WITH BARNABAS TO ANTIOCH.

"(*a*) AND it came to pass in Iconium, that" the two apostles "entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke, that a very great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks did believe. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up and incensed the minds of the Gentiles (1) against the brethren. A long time therefore they abode there, dealing confidently in the Lord, who gave testimony to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. And the multitude of the city was divided; and some of them, indeed, held with the Jews, but some with the apostles. And when there was an assault made by the Gentiles and the Jews, with their rulers, to use them contumeliously and to stone them, they understanding it, fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the whole country round about, and were there preaching the Gospel."

"And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. This same heard Paul speaking, who looking upon him, and seeing that he had

(*a*) Chap. xiv., ver. 1.

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(1) The Jews, who were the first persecutors of Christianity, were also the authors and the instigators of the first persecutions which it encountered from the Gentiles. Stained as they were with the blood of all the prophets, from Abel down to Jesus Christ, they had the unhappy art of rendering themselves guilty of the blood of all the martyrs, from the Saviour himself till the end of the persecutions. What a fearful mass of iniquity heaped on one single nation!

In what way could they excite the Gentiles to anger, except by representing to them that this new doctrine tended to the destruction of their temples and idols? Thus it was that men, who were the most opposed to idolatry, became its abettors. Nor is this surprising when we come to consider the inveterate hatred with which false religions regard the true. So, Protestants in general would rather see the whole world Mahometan than Catholic.

faith to be healed (1), said with a loud voice: Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked. And when the multitudes had seen what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice in the Lycaonian tongue, saying: The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; but Paul, Mercury; because he was chief speaker. The priest also of Jupiter, that was before the city, bringing oxen and garlands before the gate, would have offered sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles Paul and Barnabas had heard, rending their clothes (2), they leaped out among the people, crying and saying: Ye men, why do ye these things? We also are mortals, men like unto you, preaching to you to be converted from these vain things (3), to the living God who made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; who, in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways (4). Nevertheless, he left not himself

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(1) St. Paul saw this man's earnest attention, and the pleasure with which he heard him. He knew by inspiration that he really had faith, and moreover, a firm confidence that the apostle had received from God power to heal him.

(2) Simply to refuse divine honors might be, in ministers of the Gospel, no more than the natural effect of ordinary virtue. What here gives proof of heroism is the rending of the garments, the darting into the midst of the crowd, and those cries of sorrow and of indignation, meant to restrain an idolatrous people. Ordinary virtue, mere human virtue, could never have produced such transports.

If, instead of offering sacrifice to them, the people, charmed with their eloquence, had cried: *They are gods who speak, and not men,* there can be no doubt that this flattery would have excited their indignation just as strongly. Would mere human virtue receive it in the same way?

It is very easy for a man to believe that he is neither Jupiter nor Mercury, but is it as easy to believe that people are mistaken when they say that he has spoken *divinely?*

People do not pause to reflect whether the pleasure they take in hearing such eulogiums is as culpable as that of the two apostles would have been had they permitted sacrifice to be offered to them. Those, however, who look upon this complacency as a venial fault, would do well to remember Herod, eaten alive by worms.

(3) That is to say, from these imaginary divinities.

(4) God allowed them to follow the corruption of their own hearts, and to form for themselves gods as vicious as they were themselves. God *suffers* them to act so, inasmuch as he does not reveal to them the light of the Gospel. Still they were not quite destitute of light, and the very works of the creation were quite sufficient to make the Creator known to them. Such is the meaning of the following words, to which St. Paul adds (Rom., i.), that they were sufficiently enlightened to be altogether inexcusable. This refutes the erroneous opinion that being entirely destitute of light, they could not

without testimony, doing good from heaven, giving rains, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And speaking these things, they scarce restrained the people from sacrificing to them."

The fickleness of the multitude is proverbial, but perhaps it never was so remarkably exemplified as on this occasion. Whilst the apostles were straining every nerve to divert the people from their impious purpose, "there came thither certain Jews from Antioch," in Pisidia, "and Iconium: and persuading the multitude" of whatever they pleased, "stoning Paul," they "drew him out of the city, thinking him to be dead. But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up (1) and entered into the city, and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."

"And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had taught many," these intrepid men "returned again to Lystra and to Iconium, and to Antioch" in Pisidia, "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith." And in order that the neophytes might not be discouraged at sight of the persecution, endured by the apostles, they taught them that fundamental maxim of the new gospel: "that" it is "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, in whom they believed.

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do otherwise than go astray. We consider this doctrine as erroneous, because it might tend to make them appear excusable, by setting aside the reason for which the apostle says they were inexcusable.

(1) It might be that he was dead, and came to life again; at least, there is no doubt that he was miraculously healed. A man who appeared to be dead, after drowning or suffocation, might, when respiration had been restored, stand upon his feet, and be able to travel on the following day; but a man who had been stoned, as it were, to death, must necessarily be all covered with wounds, and even if none of them were mortal, it would require some time to heal them so that the patient could stand up, walk, or set out on a journey.

This was the time when, according to the most accurate chronology, St. Paul was raised to the third heaven. It is thought that this might have occurred during the time that he appeared to be dead, but here a difficulty presents itself. As the apostle says that he knew not whether he was raised *in the body, or out of the body,* it seems as though the disciples by whom he was surrounded might easily have enlightened him on this point, by informing him whether his body had, or had not disappeared.

And passing through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia, and having spoken the word of the Lord in Perge, they went down into Attalia; and thence they sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been delivered to the grace of God, unto the work which they accomplished. And when they were come, and had assembled the church, they related what great things God had done with them (1), and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they abode no small time with the disciples."

CHAPTER XV.

DISPUTE ON THE SUBJECT OF CIRCUMCISION.—PAUL AND BARNABAS COME TO CONSULT WITH THE OTHER APOSTLES.—COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM.—SEPARATION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS.

"(*a*) My thoughts are not your thoughts," saith the Lord, "and heaven is not more exalted above the earth than my thoughts are above your thoughts." This is what men will not understand; and, rather than submit their own thoughts to those of the Lord, they reject his altogether, because they are contrary to theirs, and hence so many unbelievers. Others there are who seek to reconcile and amalgamate both together, and it is this unholy adulteration which has given rise to all heresies, and all errors. The converted Jews, still zealous for their old law, began by seeking to blend Judaism with Christianity. Then came the philosophers, who tried to engraft upon it their own Platonic conceits. But we have only to deal with the former. (*b*) "Some coming down from Judea" to Antioch, "taught the brethren: That except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved. And when Paul and Bar-

(*a*) Isaias, lv. 8. (*b*) Acts, xv. 1.

(1) That is to say, all that God had done by their ministry. St. Paul said, in the same way: "Yet not I, but the grace of God, *with me*" (1 Cor., xv. 10).

nabas had no small contest with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of the other side, should go up to the apostles and priests to Jerusalem, about this question."

St. Paul had, however, another motive for undertaking this journey, as he informs us in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians. It was (*a*) "according to revelation," says he, "that I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I conferred with" the people of that church, on "the Gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but apart with them who seemed to be something: lest perhaps I should run, or had run in vain."

In another place he names those to whom he here merely alludes. They were James, Cephas, and John, who were, as it were, the pillars of the Church. He, however, learned nothing from them, as he himself also tells us in the same epistle; Jesus Christ had given him all necessary instruction, but as this instruction was given by revelation, it was requisite to teach the world by his example that all revelation must be confronted with the doctrine of the Church, and receive its certainty from her approbation. If this rule had always been observed, there would never have been either visionaries or fanatics.

But to return to the deputation, which was the ostensible occasion of this journey, the two apostles "being brought on their way by" several brethren of "the church" of Antioch, "passed through Phenicia and Samaria, relating the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received by the Church, and by the apostles and ancients, declaring how great things God had done with them. But," said they (1), "there arose some of the sect of the Pharisees that believed, saying: They must be circumcised, and be commanded to observe the law of Moses."

(*a*) Gal., ii. 2.

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(1) *Said they* is added, as though what follows had been related both by Paul and Barnabas, and it appears very natural that such should have been the case. The text, in another place, would induce the belief that it was the Jews, wedded to their own laws, who being present at this recital of the two apostles, proposed their difficulty. Neither explanation has any thing to do with the main subject, and each has been entertained by good commentators.

The question was proposed, and it became necessary to decide one way or the other. "The apostles and ancients assembled," therefore, "to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter, rising up, said to them: Men, brethren, you know that in former days God made choice among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles (1) should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, gave testimony (2), giving unto them the Holy Ghost as well as to us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why tempt you God (3), to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear (4)? But by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," and not by the works of the law, "we believe to be saved, in like manner as they also (5)."

"And all the multitude held their peace; and they heard Barnabas and Paul telling," in order to show that the doctrine just pro-

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(1) Cornelius, and his household, as we have seen in chap. x.

(2) The testimony here referred to did not immediately relate to the truths announced by Peter, but rather to the purification; or, in other words, the sanctification of the Gentiles. The Holy Ghost, by descending visibly upon them, testified that they really were saints, uncircumcised though they were. Hence it followed that neither the whole, nor any part of Judaism was necessary to justification, nor to salvation, which is the fruit thereof.

(3) To tempt God is to require or expect from him useless or superfluous miracles. It is in the same sense that Jesus Christ himself makes use of this word (Matt., iv.). They to whom St. Peter spoke were exactly in the same position, for God having sufficiently manifested his will by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon the uncircumcised, to demand yet other proofs was to ask of God a new miracle, which the first had rendered superfluous.

(4) This impossibility signifies no more than a great difficulty. God himself testifies that many have borne this yoke; that is to say, that they have kept the whole law. Of this number were Zachary and Elizabeth, of whom it is written that they were both just before God; "walking in *all* the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame" (Luke, i. 6).

(5) *In like manner as they also.* St. Augustine understands this as, *our fathers* who could only be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ; and he makes use of this text against Pelagius to prove that without this grace those who are here called *our fathers* could not be saved, either under the law of nature, or the written law. This dogma is clearly defined, and pertains to faith; but the proof is only conclusive against those who understand this, *in like manner as they also* as referring to *our fathers*, rather than to the Gentiles, as most of the commentators do. Perhaps Pelagius took it in the former sense.

posed by Peter was the favored of heaven, "what great signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."

"And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying: Men, brethren, hear me. Simon hath related how God first visited to take of the Gentiles a people to his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written: *After these things I will return, and will rebuild the tabernacle of David* (1) *which is fallen down, and the ruins thereof I will rebuild, and I will set it up, that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all nations upon whom my name is invoked* (2), *saith the Lord who doth these things.* To the Lord was his own work known from the beginning."

Peter had decided; the miracles related by Paul and Barnabas served to confirm his decision, to which James had subjoined the evidence of the prophecies: it remained only to draw the conclusion, and this was also done by James, who made a proposal, which was unanimously adopted. He therefore continues as follows:

"For which cause (3) I judge that they, who from among the Gentiles are converted to God, are not to be disquieted, but that we write unto them to refrain themselves from the pollutions of idols (4), and from fornication (5), and from things strangled, and from blood."

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(1) By the tabernacle of David we understand the Jewish nation, incredulous and condemned, and in consequence thereof dispersed and destroyed. From its scattered fragments, the converted Jews, together with the Gentiles, God shall form a new tabernacle of David; that is to say, a new "people of God," engrafted on the stock of David, whereof the Messiah, the son of David, shall be the everlasting king.

(2) This prophecy is from Amos, ix. 12. There is a slight difference between the words of the prophet and the quotation given by the apostle; the difference, however, is not so great as to affect the meaning.

(3) *For which cause.* The prophecy refers only to the vocation of the Gentiles, while the apostle infers from it that the Gentiles so called shall not be subjected to the yoke of the Mosaic law. The connection between the principle and the effect is not at first discernible, but a very little reflection will serve to make it manifest. All nations shall be called: therefore circumcision shall be abolished, since it was only instituted in order to distinguish God's chosen people from all others. Now, by the vocation of the Gentiles, the people of God was to be formed from all the nations of the earth; all distinctions were, therefore, superfluous, and, amongst others, circumcision, the abolition of which implied that of the whole Jewish law.

(4) Meats defiled by having been offered to the idols.

(5) The Gentiles did not consider fornication a crime, and it is to be feared that many amongst them retained this fatal notion even after they became Christians.

He then anticipates the question which might possibly be asked: Why not give a similar prohibition to the converted Jews? It is because they are already sufficiently instructed on all these points; "for," he adds, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him in the synagogues, where he is read every Sabbath. Then it pleased the apostles and ancients with the whole Church (1) to choose men of their own company, and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas (2), *namely*, Judas, who was surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, writing by their hands: The apostles and ancients (3) brethren (4) to the brethren of the Gentiles that are at Antioch, and in Syria and Cilicia, greeting (5). Forasmuch as we have heard that some, going out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, to whom we gave no commandment, it hath seemed good to us, being assem-

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(1) *The whole Church* might have a voice in the choice of deputies, but not in the decision.

(2) The dispute had commenced with Paul and Barnabas. Their opponents might, consequently, have regarded them as parties concerned, and therefore not to be relied on in this affair. Assistants were accordingly given them who, not having been present when the question was first mooted, could not be suspected of favoring either party.

(3) It is still the same Greek word which the Vulgate translates at one time by *ancients*, and at another by *priests*, wherefore it is to be inferred that these two words are synonymous.

It is well known that in those early days the name of priest and that of bishop were given indiscriminately to both. It is very probable that the vast superiority of the apostolic order over all the inferior grades made the latter appear almost equal. When once the apostles were removed, bishops assumed their rightful position as the chiefs of the Church, and priests were known as such. Names were no longer used in common, and each order was distinguished by its own appellation.

(4) There are some who translate the ancients *and* the brethren. The brethren, thus distinguished from the ancients, can only mean the laity, who, therefore, appear to concur with the apostles, and the ancients or priests, in issuing a decree which is at the same time dogmatical and legislative. The necessary consequence would be the introduction of the democratic principle into ecclesiastical government, wherefore we must say with the Vulgate, *the apostles and ancients brethren* (*seniores fratres*). It is true that the ordinary Greek text says, the ancients *and* the brethren; but there are some very ancient Greek copies wherein we read, as in the Vulgate, *the ancients, brethren.* It has been long since ascertained that the more ancient the Greek manuscripts are, they are the more conformable to the Vulgate.

(5) It is thought that this letter was drawn up by St. James. Besides that its contents had been furnished by him, it is remarked that he is the only one of the apostles who, in his canonical epistle, makes use of the word *greeting*, as here found.

bled together, to choose out men, and to send them unto you with our well-beloved Barnabas and Paul," two "men that have given their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent, therefore, Judas and Silas, who themselves also will by word of mouth tell you the same things" which we have written. "For it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us (1), to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things: That you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication (2). From which things keeping yourselves, you shall do well. Fare ye well."

"They, therefore, being dismissed, went down to Antioch; and gathering together the multitude, delivered the epistle, which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, with many words comforted the

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(1) *And to us.* The addition of these words signifies that the apostles were not only the organs of the Holy Ghost, but that they judged with him and as he did: in a word, that the Holy Ghost presided over the assembly, and that the apostles were as his assistants. Such is the dignity to which God elevates his ministers, and such is the power which he gives unto them.

When it seemed good unto *them*, the inference must be that it also seemed good to the Holy Ghost, because of the promises made to the Church, which was represented by their assembly. So it is with every council wherein the Church is represented.

(2) Of these four prohibitions, there is only one which still subsists, and shall always subsist, viz., that which interdicts fornication. The law whereby it is prohibited is divine, and even natural, according to the opinion of St. Thomas, and most of the theologians. The general reason for giving the three others was a wise condescension to the weakness of the Jews, many of whom could never have brought themselves to enter with the Gentiles into the unity of the same church, if they saw them make use of meats which their ancient law forbade, and which long habit had accustomed them to consider as abominable. But there was yet another reason for avoiding meats which had been offered to idols, for to eat of the victim (*quasi idolothytum*, 1 Cor., viii. 7) *as such*, was to have a share in the sacrifice. It is true that the meat might be eaten without any such bad intention, but there was reason to fear that first impressions, which are never entirely effaced, might revive in many of the Gentiles, so that by eating of those meats they might still fancy that they performed an act of religion.

These laws ceased to bind when the reasons on which they were grounded ceased to exist. They were observed by the Latin Church for some centuries, and by the Greek Church they are still religiously kept.

It is by tradition we know that they were not to be of perpetual obligation. If those who reject the authority of tradition apply the light of reason to this matter, they must necessarily think themselves obliged to observe these laws.

brethren, and confirmed them. And after they had spent some time there, they were let go with peace by the brethren unto them that had sent them. But it seemed good unto Silas to remain there, and Judas alone departed to Jerusalem."

"Paul and Barnabas continued at Antioch, teaching and preaching with many others the word of the Lord. And after some days, Paul said to Barnabas: Let us return, and visit our brethren in all the cities wherein we have preached the word of the Lord, to see how they do. And Barnabas would have taken with them John also that was surnamed Mark: but Paul desired that he (as having departed from them out of Pamphylia, and not gone with them to the work" of the Lord) "might not be received. And there arose a dissension (1), so that they departed one from another, and Barnabas, indeed, taking Mark, sailed to Cyprus. But Paul, choosing Silas, departed, being delivered by the brethren to the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches: commanding them to keep the precepts of the apostles and the ancients."

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(1) The saints will always whatsoever God wills, but they have not always a certain knowledge of what his will is. In that case they are not to be blamed for adhering to their own opinions, because each sincerely believes that such is the will of God.

The guardian angel of Persia resisted for twenty years the angel who spoke to Daniel (Dan., x.). Hence there is a difference of opinion even amongst the angels, yet in them it never gave rise to disunion of hearts. We may believe that such was the case with the two apostles. The latter being both persuaded that what they respectively thought was according to God and to reason, were quite right not to yield through complaisance for a colleague. God, who revealed to them so many things, left them in ignorance as to which was right, or which wrong. He knew that this very uncertainty would be the cause of their separation, which was, at that time, in conformity with his will, to the end that the seed of the word might be scattered in several places at the same time. Judging by the event, both were right. The leniency of Barnabas saved Mark from being excluded from the ministry, while the strictness of Paul excited him to so great an increase of fervor, that he was again associated with the apostle of nations, whose approbation he merited and obtained. Finally, he attained to so high a degree of sanctity, that it is said of him, as of St. Peter, that his shadow alone cured the sick. See the *Roman Martyrology, Sept.* 27th.

CHAPTER XVI.

TIMOTHY CIRCUMCISED.—PAUL FORBIDDEN BY THE HOLY GHOST TO PREACH IN ASIA OR IN BITHYNIA.—HE IS CALLED INTO MACEDONIA.—A SORCERESS DISPOSSESSED.—PAUL AND SILAS ARE SCOURGED, IMPRISONED, AND EXPELLED THE COUNTRY.

JUDAISM had ceased to bind, as we have had more than once occasion to remark; but it was not, as yet, proscribed. Its ordinances might either be observed or omitted at pleasure. The apostles did this, but they did it not on the impulse of their own tastes or fancies: whether they followed the Mosaic law, or saw fit to dispense therewith, they were guided by a law superior to all others, viz., that of charity. With the Jews, therefore, they observed the practices of Judaism, while, according to circumstances, they conformed to the customs of the Gentiles (in things not forbidden by the Christian code) in order to gain them to Jesus Christ. An instance of the former compliance we are about to see in the most zealous defender of evangelical liberty: Paul, who was then visiting the churches founded by him, (*a*) "came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold there was a certain disciple, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman that believed, but his father was a Gentile. To this man the brethren that were in Lystra and Iconium gave a good testimony. Him Paul would have to go along with him: and taking him he circumcised him, because of the Jews who were in those places; for they all knew that his father was a Gentile."

He, therefore, did this through condescension to his weaker brethren. Timothy, who submitted to this painful operation in order to fit himself for laboring amongst the Jews, showed thereby that his zeal was equal to any trial, and that he was really worthy of the ministry to which he was called. They departed without delay, and "as they passed through the cities, they delivered unto them the decrees for to keep, that were decreed by the apostles and ancients who were at Jerusalem. And the churches were confirmed in faith;" and delivered from the fear of being brought under the Mosaic law, they became every day more numerous.

(*a*) Acts, xvi. 1.

"And when they had passed through Phrygia and the country of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia (1). And when they were come into Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus (2) suffered them not. And when they had passed through Mysia, they went down to Troas; and a vision was shewed to Paul in the night, which was a man of Macedonia standing and beseeching him, and saying: Pass over into Macedonia, and help us. And as soon as he had seen the vision, immediately we (3) sought to go into Macedonia, being assured that God had called us to preach the Gospel to them. And sailing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were in this city some days conferring" with the people of that place.

"And upon the Sabbath-day we went forth without the gate by a river-side, where it seemed that there was prayer (4): and sitting down we spoke to the women that were assembled. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God (5), did hear; whose heart the Lord opened

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(1) People have asked what could be the reason for this prohibition. Some have answered that it was because those nations were reprobate, but the answer is a bad one. Catholic theology recognizes none as reprobates, properly speaking, until after death. Let us, therefore, say with St. Chrysostom, and other commentators, that this interdict was only temporary, God seeing fit to postpone the conversion of those nations till a more convenient time: or else that it was personal to St. Paul, because God reserved the apostolate of Bithynia for St. Peter, and that of Asia for St. John, notwithstanding that St. Paul might have preached there at another time; for what is here called Asia was only one particular country, of which Ephesus was the capital. Let this matter be explained as it may, the prohibition did not prevent St. Paul from writing, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that God *will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth* (1 Tim., ii. 4).

(2) The same who has just been named as the Holy Ghost, who is no less the Spirit of the Son than of the Father. This text serves to prove that he proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father.

(3) *We.* St. Luke here begins to speak in the first person, which leads us to think that it was only then he joined St. Paul, and became the companion of his travels.

(4) The Greek word appears to signify an oratory. The Jews had them near their cities, especially those which had no synagogues.

(5) Since it is written of Lydia, even before her conversion to Christianity, that she *served God*, it is natural to conclude that she was a Jewess, or at least a proselyte.

to attend to those things which were said by Paul (1). And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying: If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us" to lodge there.

"And it came to pass as we went to prayer, a certain girl, having a pythonical spirit (2), met us, who brought to her masters much gain by divining. This same, following Paul and us, cried out, saying: These men are the servants of the most high God, who preach unto you the way of salvation (3). And this she did many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit: I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to go out from her. And he (4) went out the same hour."

This miracle might have converted any well-disposed person, but it enraged those whose interest it was to keep the girl in the possession of the evil spirit. "The masters of the girl, seeing that the hope of their gain was gone, apprehending Paul and Silas, brought

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(1) The apostle has said well: That if grace open not the ear of the heart, he is not heard. This grace is usually the fruit of prayer. Let preachers ask it for their hearers, and they for themselves, then shall the seed of the Word bear fruit an hundred-fold.

(2) This spirit was a devil, so called from the name of Apollo Pythian, who had a famous shrine at Delphos, where he gave oracles through the priestesses of the temple. These were called Pythonesses, which name is also given in Scripture to the witch whom Saul consulted.

(3) It seems as though this testimony might have assisted the preaching of the Gospel, yet Paul stopped it short. We cannot understand all the reasons which induced him to do so, but we know of two, which were in themselves more than sufficient. The first is the example of Jesus Christ when he imposed silence on the demons who announced his divinity; the other is, that St. Paul was well acquainted with the wiles of Satan, who never speaks the truth but when he can make it subservient to error, or conducive to the success of his own wicked purposes. We must except those cases (which are very rare) wherein he was compelled by the power of God to speak.

(4) General, or universal propositions, are always subject to correction. Van Dale, an Anabaptist physician, and M. de Fontenelle, who abridged his work, have pretended that *all* the oracles were, without exception, the tricks and impostures of the pagan priests, without any intervention from the devils. There is no doubt that much of the effect was produced by stratagem; but it must be acknowledged that it was the devil who spoke through the mouth of this girl, since the Scripture expressly says so. This fact leads us to suppose that there were many others of a similar kind, but even this one instance is quite sufficient to overturn the new thesis referred to; for, to borrow the words of M. de Fontenelle: *This is one of those cases wherein the very slightest exception destroys the general proposition.*

them into the market-place to the rulers. And presenting them to the magistrates, they said: These men disturb our city, being Jews, and preach a fashion which it is not lawful for us to receive, nor observe, being Romans. And the people ran together," excited "against them; and the magistrates, rending off their clothes, commanded them to be beaten with rods (1). And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them diligently. Who having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks (2)."

"And at midnight (3) Paul and Silas praying (4), praised God. And they that were in prison heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and the bands

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(1) St. Luke mentions only this one flagellation of St. Paul, but he suffered many others. *Thrice,* says he, *was I beaten with rods. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes, save one* (2 Cor., xi.). The Jews were forbidden by their law to give more than forty stripes, and, for fear of exceeding that number, they never gave more than thirty-nine. They made use of leather thongs for the purpose, whereas the Romans employed rods; but unlike the Jews, the latter people had no fixed number of lashes prescribed by law.

(2) *Stocks.* Called by the French *ceps,* a name which comes from the Latin word *cippus.* They are hollow pieces of wood, into which the feet of the prisoners are thrust and there made fast. It is said that they are sometimes used as instruments of torture.

(3) It was a common practice amongst the primitive Christians to arise in the night to sing the praises of God. If even the lay brethren did this, we may well believe that the apostles were not unmindful of a practice so good and pious. The latter had indeed learned it of their divine Master, of whom we read in several parts of the Gospel that he spent the night in prayer. This custom, however, dates higher still, for David says of himself: *I arose in the night to sing thy praise* (Ps. cxviii., ver. 62). It has been perpetuated to our own times by the ministers of religion, and by pious persons of both sexes, who are accustomed to rise during the night to sing matins. It must be owned that within the last century it has fallen so much into disuse amongst us, that there is reason to fear that it may be entirely abolished. I say *amongst us,* and not in the whole Church, because whatever comes from God and his Spirit, shall subsist within her pale till the end of time; the works of grace having no less stability than those of nature, which are to last till the final consummation of all things, in so far, at least, that no one kind shall ever be entirely destroyed.

(4) Though outraged, scourged, covered with wounds, imprisoned, and in chains, still they are as exact in the practice of their devotions as though they were in their lodgings, free and tranquil—what a miracle of fidelity! They sing, in that condition, hymns and canticles of praise—what a miracle of fortitude!

of all were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the doors of the prison open, drawing his sword, would have killed himself (1), supposing that the prisoners had fled."

"Paul," in the darkness of night, and the obscurity of his dungeon, could not see what was going forward, but being divinely informed of the jailer's design, he "cried with a loud voice, saying: Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Then calling for a light, he went in, and trembling, fell down at the feet of Paul and Silas. And bringing them out, he said: Masters, what must I do that I may be saved? But they said: Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they preached the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he, taking them the same hour of the night, washed their stripes; and himself was baptized, and all his house immediately (2). And when he had brought them into his own house, he laid the table for them, and rejoiced with all his house, believing God."

Whether it was that the jailer had privately apprised the magistrates of what had passed during the night, or that the latter began to repent of the cruelty wherewith they had treated these strangers, without having any certainty of their guilt, "When the day was come, the magistrates sent the sergeants (3), saying: Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told these words to Paul: The magistrates have sent to let you go: now, therefore, depart and go in peace. But Paul said to them: They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out privately? Not so; but let them

(1) He would kill himself, in order to escape being put to death. We see by this instance, together with certain others in this history, that those who had charge of prisoners were bound to give them up again under pain of death.

(2) Were they then sufficiently instructed? Certainly they were, because the Holy Ghost, who accommodates his operations to the circumstances of time, place, and persons, had taught them as much in one hour as they might have learned in a month, if they had had so long a time to prepare themselves.

(3) These were a kind of hussars who walked before the magistrates, bearing axes, wrapped up in bundles of rods, which they untied, either to scourge or to behead those who were sentenced to undergo either punishment, and sometimes both together.

come (1), and let us out themselves. And the sergeants told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid (2), hearing that they were Romans. And coming, they besought them; and bringing them out, they desired them to depart out of the city (3). And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and having seen the brethren, they comforted them (4), and departed" from Philippi. The few faithful people whom they left there were, as it were, blessed seed, which produced fruits the most abundant. Of this we have a proof in the epistle which the apostle wrote to the Philippians, when he was a prisoner at Rome, for the first time.

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(1) It was neither pride nor resentment that made St. Paul demand this satisfaction; it was merely the effect of his zeal, because he considered that his own personal disgrace, if not removed, might in that country be a stain upon the Gospel itself. Besides, a man is not only permitted, but actually obliged, to defend his own honor, according to the saying of the Wise Man: *Try to have a good reputation* (Eccle., xli. 15). Nevertheless, it is so hard to exclude all human passion from such a defence, that a Christian, not having the advantages possessed by St. Paul, should never undertake it without consulting an enlightened director, who will be an impartial judge in the case.

(2) He would, therefore, have escaped the flagellation, had he, at first, declared himself a Roman citizen. It was thus that he escaped when the tribune Lysias would have had him scourged, as will be seen (chap. xxii.). We are not to seek for any other motive, on either occasion, than the impulse of the Holy Ghost, who inspired him at one time to submit to the punishment, and again to avoid it.

(3) Some Greek copies add that they said to them: *Depart from this city, lest they again rise up against you, and cannot be quelled.* This looks very much like a commentary which has found its way into the text. Whatever it may be, it gives a very probable reason for urging them to quit the city.

(4) The afflicted are here the consolers, while they who have suffered nothing stand in need of consolation. The unction of grace in the former, and in the latter a tender feeling of compassion, are the causes of these opposite effects. The former, especially, was a phenomenon which had never yet been seen, and which was just as great a prodigy in those days as the wondrous cures and resurrections effected by the apostles.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREACHING AT THESSALONICA.—A TUMULT CAUSED BY THE JEWS.—ST. PAUL IN ATHENS.—HIS DISCOURSE IN THE AREOPAGUS FOLLOWED BY THE CONVERSION OF DENIS THE AREOPAGITE.

PAUL and Silas (for it does not appear that the apostle had then any other companions, and from the manner in which St. Luke speaks, it is sufficiently evident that he was not of the party), Paul, then, and Silas, "(*a*) when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul, according to his custom, went in unto them; and for three Sabbath-days he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, declaring and insinuating that the CHRIST was to suffer (1) and to rise again from the dead; and that this is JESUS CHRIST," said he, "whom I preach to you. And some of them believed, and were associated to Paul and Silas, and of those that served God (2), and of the Gentiles a great multitude, and of noble women not a few."

"But the Jews, moved with envy, and taking unto them some wicked men of the vulgar sort, and making a tumult, set the city in an uproar: and besetting Jason's house, sought to bring them out unto the people. And not finding them, they drew Jason and certain brethren to the rulers of the city, crying: They that set the city in an uproar are come hither also, whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there

(*a*) Acts, xvii. 1.

(1) It is so clearly proved in Scripture that Christ was to suffer, that some of the Jews, who could not deny the fact, have been reduced to the necessity of imagining two Christs, or two Messiahs—the one suffering and humble, the other glorious and triumphant. The latter is he whom they still expect. "The former is already come," say they, "and is concealed in Rome, amongst the poor, with whom he eats the bread of charity."

(2) The Greek has it, *a great number of Gentiles, serving God*, that is to say, Gentile proselytes. They are here separated, after the Vulgate; and if they are made two distinct classes, then *those that served God* are the proselytes, and the Gentiles are those who were still idolaters till they were converted by the preaching of St. Paul.

is another king, JESUS. And they stirred up the people; and the rulers of the city hearing these things, and having taken satisfaction of Jason, and of the rest (1), they let them go. But the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, who received the word with all eagerness, daily searching the Scriptures (2), whether these things were so," even as they told them. "And many indeed of them believed, and of honorable women that were Gentiles, and of men not a few. And when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was also preached by Paul at Berea, they came thither also, stirring up and troubling the multitude. And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul, to go unto the sea; but Silas and Timothy remained there," the latter, it would seem, having followed them thither. "And they that conducted Paul, brought him as far as Athens, and receiving a com-

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(1) It was the magistrates whom Jason satisfied, and not either the Jews or those whom they had stirred up, all of whom were people who were incapable of reasoning. Many commentators are of opinion that in this satisfaction given by Jason, he took upon him to answer for Paul and Silas. That, however, seems very improbable, for if Jason had given any such security, it is not at all likely that St. Paul would have made his escape, as he did on the following night, leaving his host in such a cruel predicament. It is much more probable that Jason satisfied the magistrates by force of reasoning, his arguments being seconded, perhaps, by an assurance that Paul and Silas should immediately quit the city.

(2) A Jew who undertakes to test by Scripture the truth of the Christian religion, has a right to seek out those texts which he is told establish its divine origin, and to see for himself whether their meaning is such as it was represented to him. Such was the case with the Jews of Berea, in regard to St. Paul. But it does not follow, as Protestants say (in abuse of this example), that these Jewish converts were at liberty to discuss every article of faith by Scripture, and to form a creed for themselves on their own private interpretation. The difference is very easily seen. The Jew, before his conversion, is in quest of the true religion, and he has a right to examine whether that which is proposed to him has the distinctive marks thereof. After his conversion, he has found and embraced it, and it only remains for him to believe what it teaches, and to do what it ordains. Otherwise he should contradict himself, since, after having been convinced of its truth, he should still doubt whether it was not false.

It is, nevertheless, permitted to seek in the Scriptures the proof of dogmas decided by the Church, so as to ascertain the foundations on which her decisions rest, to penetrate farther into their meaning, in order to explain them to the people, and to refute those who oppose them, but never with a view to reform or amend them.

mandment from him to Silas and Timothy, that they should come to him with all speed, they departed."

"Now whilst Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred within him, seeing the city wholly given to idolatry (1). He disputed, therefore, in the synagogue with the Jews, and with them that served God, and in the market-place, every day with them that were there. And certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics disputed with him, and some said: What is it that this word-sower would say (2)? But others: He seemeth to be a setter forth of new gods; because he preached to them JESUS and the resurrection. And taking him, they brought him to Areopagus (3), saying: May we know what this new doctrine is which thou speakest of? For thou bringest in certain new things to our ears. We would know, therefore, what these things mean. (Now all the Athenians, and the strangers that were there, employed themselves in nothing else but either in telling or in hearing some new thing.)"

"But Paul, standing in the midst of Areopagus, said: Ye men of

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(1) Athens was the most intellectual city in the world, but it was, at the same time, the most idolatrous; that is to say, the most senseless, in regard to religion. Religion is in no way the offspring of the human mind, which can never meddle with it without marring its divine beauty, and the more intellect the innovator has, he is the more prone to extravagance, seeing that the greater the genius, it is the more tinctured with *human reason.*

(2) The Latin word, like the Greek, literally signifies a *word-sower.* They themselves were nothing else, so that this name was more applicable to them than to any other persons: these philosophers were, in reality, the most useless of all men. If the whole race had perished, the State would have sustained less loss than in being deprived of one good laborer.

(3) *Areopagus,* a Greek word which might be translated by *the hill of Mars,* and which was one of the divisions of the city. The senate of Athens sat there, either in the temple of Mars, or some neighboring edifice; for which reason the senate itself received the name of Areopagus. It is not decided whether St. Paul was brought before the tribunal, or simply into that district, so as to be heard by a greater number of people, seeing that it was at all times the most crowded portion of the city.

This then was the first of those three grand theatres whereon God had decreed that St. Paul should have the glory of confessing his name: the Areopagus in Athens, the grand council of the Jews in Jerusalem, and the presence of Cæsar in Rome. On these three occasions he thus had to contend against all the refinement and subtlety of intellect, the unbridled fury of evil passions, and the formidable array of human power at its utmost height. What confidence he must have had, and how well might he say, as he has done: *I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me* (Phil., iv. 13).

Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious. For, passing by and seeing your idols, I found an altar also on which was written: To THE UNKNOWN GOD (1). What therefore you worship without knowing it, that I preach to you. God who made the world and all things therein, he being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands (2); neither is he served with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing it is he who giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. And hath made of one, all mankind, to dwell upon the whole face of the earth, determining appointed times, and the limits of their habitation, that they should seek God, if happily they may feel (3) after him and find him; although he be not far away from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and be; as some also of your own poets said: *For we are also his offspring* (4). Being, therefore, the offspring of God (5), we must not suppose the divinity to be like unto gold or silver, or stone, the graving of art and device of man (6). And God

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(1) St. Jerome says that this altar was dedicated *to the unknown gods*, in the plural It is true that there was one at Athens with that inscription, but from the way in which St. Paul speaks we cannot doubt but there was also one to *the unknown God*, in the singular. Lucian, or whoever the author of the *Philopatris* may be, speaks of having seen it. What idea the Athenians had of this God, and for what purpose they raised an altar to him, can now be only conjectured. Whatever they may have thought of it, if we take the inscription just as it stands, we must admit that St. Paul was perfectly correct in his application of it to the true God. That name belongs to him alone; and of all those to whom the Athenians gave it, he was the only one whom they knew not.

This exordium of the apostle is very ingenious; while its real object was to destroy all the gods of the Athenians, its apparent purpose was to make them acquainted with one more, whom they knew not before.

(2) God resides in a special manner in the temples which are consecrated to him, but he is not confined thereto. This is what St. Paul means, and his remark is intended for the instruction of the pagans, who knew of no other presence of their gods than that by which they were really present in the places which they occupied.

(3) Although God is invisible, he may be known by reasoning and reflection, which are, as it were, the groping (or feeling) of the soul, just as a blind man may find the various articles of furniture in his room by groping.

(4) This quotation is from Aratus, a Greek poet and astronomer. He has left a poem on phenomenons, which Cicero translated into Latin verse.

(5) *The offspring of God*, that is to say, his works, for it is not of his own substance that God forms bodies or souls.

(6) The workman is always superior to his work. Therefore if man, considered with regard to his spirit, which is his noblest part, cannot be represented by figures of stone

indeed having winked at the times of this ignorance, now declareth unto men that all should everywhere do penance, because he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in equity, by the man whom he hath appointed; giving faith to all, by raising him up from the dead."

"And when they had heard of the resurrection of the dead, some indeed, mocked; but others said: We will hear thee again (1) concerning this matter. So Paul went out from among them (2). But certain men adhering to him, did believe; among whom was also Dionysius the Areopagite (3), and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

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or metal, how much less God, who, being the creator of spirits, must be of all other spirits the purest, and, if one may say so, the most spiritual. This is the drift of St. Paul's argument.

Nevertheless God may be represented under the different figures in which Scripture describes him as having appeared to men. Still it must not be imagined that these figures resemble him, as the pagans believed their idols to be the images of their gods.

Catholics have never imagined that the Holy Ghost resembled a dove, though they represent him under that form.

(1) There was no other opportunity for them; and how many souls have perished for neglecting to profit by the first opportunity given them!

(2) Some interpreters think that this was a formal denunciation, like that of Socrates, and that St. Paul's life was at stake. This is not at all probable, for such a denunciation, hurled against a tribunal so solemn, would have ended either in a condemnation or acquittal, and not by laughter and an appointment to meet again.

(3) It is now admitted that St. Denis, bishop and apostle of Paris, was not the Areopagite. The only thing known of the latter is that he was the first bishop of Athens, and that he suffered martyrdom, some say under Adrian, others (with more probability), under Domitian.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PAUL PREACHES THE GOSPEL IN CORINTH AND AFTERWARDS IN EPHESUS.—APOLLO.

ATHENS had received the seed, and the apostle had gathered the first-fruits thereof. It was time to extend it to another country, wherein it was to produce an abundant harvest, even under his own eyes. (*a*) "After these things, departing from Athens, he came to Corinth. And finding a certain Jew, named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with Priscilla his wife" (they had left Italy, "because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome) (1), he came to them. And because he was of the same trade, he remained with them, and wrought (2): (now they were tent-makers by trade.)"

(*a*) Acts, xviii. 1.

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(1) Suetonius says that the Jews were expelled from Rome because of the disturbance they had raised there, *impulsore Chresto*, at the instigation of *Chrest*. Here, in two words, we find as many blunders: one in the name of Jesus Christ, whom he calls *Chrest*, and the other in the time of his death, which happened many years previous to these troubles which he attributes to his instigation. We find here, however, the true cause of this expulsion: it was nothing else than the rising up of the unbelieving Jews against their brethren who had embraced the faith of Christ, whereupon Claudius banished them all, without pausing to examine which was right or which wrong. It appears, notwithstanding, that their banishment was not of long duration, for when St. Paul first went to Rome, he found Jews established there; and we learn from his epistle to the Romans, which was written previous to that first visit, that Aquila and his wife had returned to Rome, since he sends his greeting to them.

(2) He had learned this trade, in conformity with the custom of the Pharisees, who were obliged by their own regulations to learn and practice some mechanical art: a very laudable custom, whether their purpose was to secure a livelihood, or merely to avoid idleness. *Paul wrought*, says St. Chrysostom, speaking of this subject, *and he preached. Well may we be ashamed—we who neither preach nor do any thing else.*

He labored to the end that he might not be a burden to the faithful, though he was entitled to have his support from them. Many there are who fatten on the wealth of the Church without doing aught to serve her. What a contrast is here!

We have already remarked that not one of the distinctive virtues of Christianity shall ever entirely disappear. St. Paul, therefore, shall always have imitators in his noble disinterestedness; and religion has still and always ministers who are generous enough to serve her, not merely without any hope of gain, but at their own expense.

"And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, bringing in the name of the Lord JESUS, and he persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia, Paul was earnest in preaching, testifying to the Jews that JESUS is the CHRIST. But they gainsaying and blaspheming, he shook his garments (1), and said to them: Your blood be upon your own heads (2): I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."

Though thus obliged to give them up, yet a lingering remnant of hope induced him to remain near them. "Departing thence, he entered into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house was adjoining to the synagogue."

The obstinate incredulity of the people could not hinder him from gathering the most precious spoils. "Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized:" the greater number by the hands of Paul's associates. (*a*) "I have baptized none of you," wrote he to the Corinthians, "but Crispus and Caius: .... and I baptized also the house of Stephanus: .... I know not whether I baptized any other." He then proceeds to give the reason: "For Christ sent me not to baptize (3), but to preach the Gospel."

We have no detailed account of what St. Paul suffered in Corinth; but we know from his own testimony that he had to suffer a great

(*a*) 1 Cor., i. 14.

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(1) A sign both of detestation and of imprecation, of which we find many examples in Scripture. Its meaning is expressed by those words of Nehemiah: *I shook my lap* (my clothes), *and said: So may God shake every man that shall not accomplish this word, out of his house, and out of his labors; thus may he be shaken out, and become empty. And all the multitude said: Amen* (2 Esdras, v. 13).

(2) That is to say, let your destruction be attributed only to yourselves. St. Paul was innocent of it, since he had done his utmost to save them. If he had not, he would have been guilty of it, and God would have required of him an account of *their blood*, according to the words of Ezechiel, quoted by the apostle in this place, and also in chap. xx.

(3) It would be very desirable if such a distribution of labor could be made in our days, so that in our apostolical expeditions, those who preached might not have to hear confessions. Both duties would then be better performed, and the priests would not be overtasked, as they now too often are.

deal. (*a*) "I was with you," he again wrote to the Corinthians, "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." The Lord permitted this to be so, lest he might begin to confide in himself, and to the end that his confidence in him should be firm and unwavering. It was to strengthen it still more that "the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision: Do not fear but speak, and hold not thy peace, because I am with thee; and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city. And he stayed there a year and six months, teaching among them the word of God."

The effect followed close upon the promise, and the event verified the prophecy. "When Gallio (1) was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat, saying: This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. And when Paul was beginning to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews: If it were some matter of injustice, or an heinous deed, O you Jews, I should with reason bear with you. But if they be questions of words (2) and names, and of your law, look you to it: I will not be judge of such things. And he drove them from the judgment-seat." It is more than probable that St. Paul immediately withdrew. Being unable, therefore, to vent their fury on him, they "all (3) laying hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the syn-

(*a*) 1 Cor., ii. 3.

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(1) Titus Annæus Gallio, brother of Seneca the philosopher. He had been adopted by one Gallio, whose name he assumed, according to the usual custom. Through the influence of his brother he obtained the proconsulate of Achaia. He was afterwards involved in his brother's disgrace, and died by his own hand. His success in this matter was the real cause of his misfortune. The fortunes of men are but too often subject to such reverses.

(2) It is not easy to say what he meant by these *words* and *names;* perhaps he scarcely knew himself. Still, it might be that he had heard that the question was, whether the names of Christ and of Messiah did or did not apply to Jesus Christ. A pagan might well consider that a mere question of *names.*

(3) The ordinary Greek says that it was *the Greeks* who beat Sosthenes. The word *Greeks,* however, appears to have been added to the text, for it is not found either in the Vulgate or in the more ancient Greek manuscripts. It is more probable, therefore, that Sosthenes was beaten by the Jews on account of his declared attachment to St. Paul. It is the opinion of the Church that he made a merit of the blows he then received, by which he consecrated the first-fruits of his faith. See the *Roman Martyrology,* Nov. 28.

agogue (1), beat him before the judgment-seat: and Gallio cared for none of those things (2)."

"Paul," notwithstanding this storm, "stayed yet many days," when "taking his leave of the brethren," he "sailed thence into Syria (and with him Priscilla and Aquila), having shorn his head in Cenchra: for he had a vow (3). And he came to Ephesus, and left" his companions "there. But he himself, entering into the synagogue, disputed with the Jews. And when they," being better disposed than the others, "desired him that he would tarry a longer time, he consented not. But taking his leave, and saying: I will return to you again, God willing, he departed from Ephesus. And going down to Cesarea, he went up *to Jerusalem*, and saluted the Church, and so came down to Antioch. And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went through the country of Galatia and Phrygia, in order, confirming all the disciples (4)."

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(1) Crispus is also called ruler of the synagogue. It follows that the synagogue must have had more than one ruler, or that otherwise there must have been more than one synagogue in Corinth. If the latter were the case, each of them would more likely be called ruler of *a* synagogue than of *the* synagogue.

(2) Gallio has been commended for his clemency, because he refused to hear the accusers of St. Paul; for his discretion, because he would not venture to decide on a difference of religion; and, perhaps, for his prudence, in declining to meddle with a matter of which he knew nothing. His indifference, however, at sight of the outrage offered to Sosthenes shows very plainly the true motive of his conduct: he had a supreme contempt for the Jews and all that concerned them.

(3) Regarding the text only, it is doubtful whether it was Aquila or St. Paul who had his head shorn. All the commentators agree in understanding it of St. Paul, and we have taken the same view. This vow was that of the Nazarenes, and consisted in allowing the hair to grow, and to abstain from wine and all other intoxicating liquors as long as the vow lasted. If it happened that, before the time was expired, the person contracted any legal impurity, the time already past counted for nothing, but the fulfilment of the vow had again to be commenced. At the conclusion, sacrifice was offered, according to the ordinance in the Book of Numbers (chap. vi.). It was through condescension to the Jews that St. Paul practised this Jewish devotion, which was not at all obligatory. He made this vow, then, at Cenchra, which was the eastern port of Corinth, when on the point of landing; if, perchance, he had done it sooner, he might have contracted some legal impurity which would have obliged him to make it over again; for we know not precisely of what nature this defilement was.

(4) Pastoral visits, which are the indispensable means of correcting evil and preserving that which is good. Their principal object is to examine into the conduct of the ministers of the second order, which can only be done by visiting the places where they



Jerusalem.

"Now a certain Jew, named Apollo, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus, one mighty in the Scriptures (1). This man was instructed in the way of the Lord: and being fervent in spirit, spoke, and taught diligently the things that are of JESUS, knowing only the baptism of John (2). This man, therefore, began to speak boldly in the synagogue; whom when Priscilla and Aquila had heard, they took him to them, and expounded to him the way of the Lord more diligently (3). And whereas he was desirous to go to Achaia, the brethren exhorting wrote to the disciples to receive him. Who, when he was come, helped them much who had believed, for with much vigor he convinced the Jews openly, showing by the Scriptures that JESUS is the CHRIST.

He thus (*a*) watered what Paul had planted, and God so blessed his labors that amongst the faithful of Corinth each one said: (*b*) "I indeed am of Paul; and I am of Apollo; and I of Cephas."

(*a*) 1 Cor., iii. 6. (*b*) 1 Cor., i. 12.

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reside, so as to admonish them if they are found neglecting their duty; or, on the other hand, if they do fulfil their duty, and meet with opposition, it is necessary to support them with all the weight of episcopal authority.

(1) *Mighty*, that is to say, not only *well versed* in the Scriptures, but also knowing how to use them efficaciously. The word *skilful* or *versed* in the Scriptures, though given here by most translators, expresses no more than half the meaning.

(2) We shall soon see that there were many others in the same error, or rather in the same ignorance. These had received in Judea the baptism of John, or it might be that some of the disciples of John had come to Ephesus to confer with them; this is a matter of which nothing is known, nor is it one of any great importance.

(3) Apollo, though so well versed in Scripture, learns a fundamental truth from two lay persons, an humble artisan and his wife. These latter, who were simple and illiterate, had learned it from St. Paul, without any other trouble than that of listening with attention and docility. Study, without the instruction of pastors, is not enough, even for the learned; whereas the teaching of pastors is quite sufficient, without any study, to enlighten and instruct even the most simple. Thus the latter are conducted, without an effort, to the knowledge of all saving truths, while the former are secured against the inflation of learning, and the wanderings of their own wayward fancies. An admirable means, proper for all men, as it is necessary for all. How can men be so blind to this truth as to leave faith to the discussion of the laity, that is to say, to all the blunders of ignorance, and to all the vagaries of the imagination?

Nevertheless Apollo's erudition was not useless to him. When once fully instructed, he was qualified thereby to become a doctor of the Church, which Priscilla or Aquila could never be.

St. Paul justly condemns these distinctions, because that by attaching themselves too much to their respective teachers or masters, they were in danger of forgetting Jesus Christ, the Master of masters, and the chief pastor of all. Still we learn by this text the high esteem in which Apollo was held, since he was, in some degree, placed on a par with the prince of the apostles.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN INSUFFICIENT.—MIRACLES OPERATED BY THE MERE TOUCHING OF THE GARMENTS OF ST. PAUL.—JEWISH EXORCISTS BEATEN AND ABUSED BY THE DEVILS.—BOOKS BURNED.—SEDITION EXCITED BY THE SILVERSMITH DEMETRIUS.

God did will what his apostle had promised only on condition that he should. "And it came to pass while Apollo was at Corinth, that Paul," faithful both to God and man, (*a*) "having passed through the upper coasts (1)" of Asia, "came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples. And he said to them: Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? But they said to him: We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost. And he said: In what (2), then, were you baptized? Who said: In John's baptism (3). Then

(*a*) Acts, xix. 1.

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(1) These provinces are Galatia and Phrygia, already spoken of in the 23d verse of the preceding chapter. They are situated to the north of Ephesus, which was, as it were, the capital of Asia Minor: it is with reference to this situation that they are here called the *upper coasts*.

(2) Does this question, then, mean that they could not have received true, that is to say, *Christian* baptism, without having heard that there was a Holy Ghost? St. Paul had them afterwards baptized, and it is said on that occasion that *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*. In this baptism, then, which is said in the Acts to have been given *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, the Holy Ghost, and consequently all the three divine persons, were expressly named. We had before promised to give this proof, and it appears to us unanswerable.

(3) Protestants have pretended that the baptism of John had the same virtue as that

Paul said: John baptized the people with the baptism of penance, saying that they should believe in him who was to come after him (1), that is to say, in JESUS. Having heard these things, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve. And entering into the synagogue, he spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing" with the Jews, "and exhorting" them "concerning the kingdom of God." These Jews, as we have already remarked, were better disposed than those of other countries; and it appears that the greater number of them heard him favorably. Nevertheless, "when some were hardened and believed not, speaking evil of the way of the Lord before the multitude, departing from them (2), he separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued for the space of two years, so that all they who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Gentiles."

"And God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles; so that even there were brought from his body to the sick handkerchiefs (3) and aprons, and the diseases departed from them,

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of Jesus Christ, and that it was also administered in the name of the three divine persons; we cannot imagine whence they derive such a notion. If these two baptisms had been exactly alike in form and in efficacy, would Apollo, *knowing only the baptism of John*, have required further instruction? And those Ephesians, of whom mention is here made, would they have answered that they had never even heard that there was a Holy Ghost, if they had heard him named in the formula of their baptism? It is this error which has called forth that canon of the Council of Trent (Sess. 7): *If any one say that the baptism of John had the same virtue as that of Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.*

(1) We learn from these words of St. Paul that St. John required of those whom he baptized, explicit faith in the near approach of the promised Messiah, from whom they were to expect that remission of their sins for which his baptism was but a remote preparation. It was for this reason, doubtless, that the title by which John usually mentioned him was *the Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world.*

(2) This was not a flight, but only a prudent retreat in order to save the unbelievers from fresh blasphemy, and the neophytes from temptation. This caution was scarcely to be expected from a man of Paul's ardent temperament, and we must conclude that through signal grace he had obtained this great victory over himself.

(3) In Latin, *sudaria*, which could only be translated literally by the word *shrouds* (*suaires*), and this, amongst us, is only applied to the garment wherein a dead body is

and the wicked spirits went out of" the bodies of the possessed. "Now some also of the Jewish exorcists (1) who went about, attempted to invoke, over them that had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying: I conjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth. And there were certain men, seven sons of Sceva (2), a Jew, a chief priest, that did this. But the wicked spirit, answering, said to them: Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you? And the man in whom the wicked spirit was, leaping upon them (3), and mastering them both, prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all the Jews and the Gentiles that dwelt at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many of them that believed, came confessing (4) and declaring their deeds.

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wrapped up. Amongst the ancients the word *sudarium* signified what was used to wipe off sweat. *Semicinctia* has been translated by *aprons*, and it is very probable that St. Paul wore them when employed in making tents. But what is more important is the fact that relics here wrought incontestable miracles. What can Protestants say to this?

(1) We have already observed that there were amongst the Jews exorcists, who successfully employed against the demons certain forms of conjuration which had come down from Solomon.

(2) So called, either because he was the head of one of the twenty-four sacerdotal families, or because he was the chief of the sacerdotal order in Ephesus.

(3) When John said to Jesus: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, who followeth not us, and we forbade him; Jesus said: *Do not forbid him* (Mark, ix. 37, 38). This was tantamount to an approval of what the man had done, and yet we cannot doubt but that on this occasion he disapproved of an action precisely similar, since he allowed the devils to give them such hard treatment. Yes; but, in the first place, circumstances might alter the case so materially that what, in one instance, might be favorable to the establishment of the faith, might, in the other, have a contrary effect; secondly, a difference of intention might cause an essential difference in the act. The man whom Jesus would not hinder, might act from the germ of faith that was in him, and with the sole purpose of relieving those whom he exorcised. The sons of Sceva might, on the other hand, regard the invocation of the name of Jesus as a sort of secret and receipt; they might seek only the glory of succeeding in their exorcisms, and apparently the profit to be gained by that success. In this case they well deserved the treatment which they got.

(4) The Latin and Greek properly signify that they *announced* their sins, that is to say, that they made a public confession of them. They did this through fervor, and to humble themselves the more; for public confession was never of precept. Hence the Council of Trent makes use of this text only to prove the necessity of sacramental confession.

And many of them who had followed curious arts (1), brought together their books, and burnt them (2) before all; and counting the price of them, they found the money to be fifty thousand pieces of silver (3). So mightily grew the word of God and was confirmed."

"And when these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying: After I have been there I must see Rome also. And sending" beforehand "into Macedonia two of them that ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself remained for a time in Asia."

"Now at that time there arose no small disturbance about the way of the Lord, for a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver temples (4) for Diana, brought no small gain to the craftsmen, whom he calling together, with the workmen of like occupation, said: Sirs, you know that our gain is by this trade. You see and hear that this Paul by persuasion hath drawn away a

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(1) Magic, the most abominable of all sciences. The ancients merely gave it the name of the *curious* science, because of the natural inclination of all men to gloss over their crimes by giving them names which seem to lessen their turpitude. So it is that, when speaking of a man who is addicted to all manner of debauchery, we say that he is *dissipated*. Nevertheless custom reconciles us to the use of these modifying expressions, so that they are employed by all, even by those who do not attach to the words the meaning which they seem to carry with them.

(2) They burned them in order *to extinguish one fire by the other*, says a Christian poet, when treating of this subject. The fire of hell either was not extinct, or would soon be rekindled for them, if this flame had not consumed that which had ministered to their crimes. There is no security, and, for the most part, no sincerity in penance, if it be not as a devouring fire, destroying all the incentives to voluptuousness, bad books, immodest pictures, &c. For what purpose would they be retained, if not to look at them?

(3) We find in the Greek, *fifty thousand pieces of silver*. There is no possibility of knowing the exact value of this sum. It was, however, very considerable, and we may thence conclude that there must have been a vast number of such books. This will not be surprising when it is known that magic was so common in Ephesus, that it had become an art and a profession. We are led to believe, notwithstanding, that there were not so many of these books as one might suppose, seeing that before the invention of printing, books were a much more expensive commodity than they now are.

(4) This is the meaning of the Greek word. It appears that these representations were in *relievo*. If they had been, as some think, solid plates, and struck in the same way that medals are, then they, requiring but a wedge and the stroke of a hammer, could not possibly have employed such a vast number of men as is here spoken of.

great multitude, not only of Ephesus, but almost of all Asia, saying. They are not gods which are made by hands."

This concerned only the silversmiths, and could not, therefore, give rise to a general tumult. Knowing this, Demetrius judged it expedient to call the religion of the people into question, and with that intention, he added: "So that not only this our craft," lucrative as it is, "is in danger to be set at naught, but also the temple (1) of great Diana shall be reputed for nothing, and her majesty begin to be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth."

"Having heard these things they were full of anger, and cried out, saying: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion, and having caught Gaius, and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions, they rushed with one accord into the theatre (2)." It was, doubtless, in order to divert attention from them, and to draw upon himself the full fury of the storm, that "Paul would have entered in unto the people," but "the disciples suffered him not. And some also of the rulers of Asia, who were his friends, sent unto him, desiring that he would not venture himself into the theatre;" and he would not go against their wishes.

"Now some cried one thing, some another. For the assembly was confused, and the greater part knew not for what cause they were come together." The Jews, fearing that this tempest might burst upon themselves, were near ruining all by the very means which they had devised to screen themselves. "And they drew forth" one of their own number, a man named Alexander, "out of the multitude, thrusting him forward. And Alexander, beckoning with his hand for silence, would have given the people satisfaction." Apparently, his purpose was to distinguish the cause of the Jews from that of Paul and the Christians. "But as soon as they per-

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(1) It is well known that the temple of Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the world. Pliny calls it the masterpiece of Grecian magnificence, and he gives us its dimensions. This temple was 425 feet in length, and 220 in breadth; its roof was supported by 127 columns, each of which was 60 feet in height. He proceeds to say that an enumeration of its beauties would fill several volumes. It was pillaged and burned by the Greeks in the reign of Gallian.

(2) The place where the theatre was, and where plays were performed. It was also the place where the people held their assemblies.

ceived him to be a Jew" (and, consequently, the declared enemy of Diana and all the heathen deities), "all with one voice, for the space of about two hours, cried out: Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

Had even one of those voices added: *Let us exterminate all her foes*, it would have sufficed to fill the city with fire and carnage. This result was very likely to happen, and the danger was already imminent, when a man who was a favorite with the people, took it upon himself, if he were not rather employed by the magistrates, to calm the minds of the people, and restore order. This man was "the town-clerk," who "when he had appeased the multitude, said: Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not that the city of the Ephesians is" especially "a worshipper of the great Diana, and of Jupiter's offspring? Forasmuch, therefore, as these things cannot be gainsaid, you ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For you have brought hither these men" (meaning Gaius and Aristarchus) "who are neither guilty of sacrilege nor of blasphemy (1) against your goddess. But if Demetrius and the craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, the courts of justice are open, and there are proconsuls; let them accuse one another. And if you inquire after any other matter, it may be decided in a lawful assembly. For we are even in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar: there being no man guilty (of whom we may give an account) of this" tumultuous "concourse."

Thus, having commenced by flattering and humoring the people, he goes on to show them what they should do, and winds up his address by hinting at what might be the result of their tumult. Seeing that he had gained his point, "when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly," the people all retiring to their homes calmly and in silence.

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(1) St. Chrysostom says that in order to quiet the people, he told an official falsehood. Nevertheless, it is possible that St. Paul and his companions might content themselves with saying, as Demetrius repeated after St. Paul: *They are not gods which are made by hands.* Then, if they insisted on Diana, he undoubtedly added that she was no more than the others, but inveighed no farther against her. It is at all times prudent, when one is obliged to declare the truth, to propose it in a manner that will not be too revolting to prejudiced minds; we see by the discourse of St. Paul in the Areopagus that he could, when necessary, avail himself of these discreet ambiguities.

CHAPTER XX.

ST. PAUL IN TROAS.—A YOUNG MAN WHO HAD BEEN KILLED BY A FALL RESTORED TO LIFE.—IN MILETUS, ST. PAUL DELIVERS AN ADDRESS AND EXHORTATION TO THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCHES.

(*a*) "PAUL," after what had happened, could no longer remain in Ephesus with safety, and without exposing the Church there to danger. Moreover, the Spirit of the Lord, who regulated all his movements, and fixed the time of his sojournings, called him then to other countries. Therefore, "after the tumult was ceased, calling to him the disciples, and exhorting them," he "took his leave, and set forward to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had exhorted them with many words, he came into Greece (1). Where when he had spent three months, the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria; so he took a resolution to return through Macedonia. And there accompanied him Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy: and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus (2). These going before, stayed for us (3)

(*a*) Acts, xx. 1.

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(1) Into Achaia, which was Greece, properly so called, although in a more enlarged sense. Macedonia was also a part of the country called Greece.

(2) All, or nearly all, these whose names we have just read, are recognized as saints by the Church, as may be seen by the Roman Martyrology.

The city of Arles honors Trophimus as its apostle. The holy pope St. Zosimus says of him that his preaching was, as it were, the source from whence the waters of faith overspread Gaul, and this testimony has been inserted in the Roman Martyrology. It proves that St. Zosimus regarded Trophimus as the first apostle of the Gauls, which throws back his apostolate to the earliest days of Christianity. We may abide by this, and leave the learned to dispute whether the Trophimus of Arles was the companion of St. Paul, or another of the same name sent into Gaul about two centuries later. Possession alone is a sufficient title for maintaining the ancient traditions, when the reasons brought forward against them are not so evident as to prove them false.

(3) St. Luke here commences again to say *us*, which signifies that he had once more become the companion of St. Paul's travels, which he had not been from the time the apostle left Philippi for Macedonia, a period of about five years. What he did during that time we know not: it might be that he employed it in collecting materials for his Gospel, speaking of which he tells us that he had carefully consulted those *who from the beginning were eye-witnesses* of the things which he had to relate; that is to say, those of

at Troas (1). But we sailed from Philippi after the days of the azymes (2), and came to them to Troas in five days, where we abode seven days."

"And on the first day of the week (3), when we were assembled to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, being to depart on the morrow: and he continued his discourse until midnight. And there were a great number of lamps in the upper chamber where we were assembled. And a certain young man named Eutychus, sitting on the window, being oppressed with a deep sleep (as Paul was long preaching), by occasion of his sleep fell from the third loft down, and was taken up dead. To whom when Paul had gone down, he laid himself upon him; and embracing him, said: Be not troubled, for his soul is in him. Then going up, and breaking bread, and tasting (4), and having talked a long time to them until daylight, so he departed. And they brought the youth alive, and were not a little comforted."

"But we, going aboard the ship, sailed to Assos, being there to take in Paul; for so he had appointed, himself purposing to travel by land. And when he had met with us at Assos (5), we took him in and came to Mitylene. And sailing thence, the day following we came over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos:

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the apostles who had lived with the Lord, and especially the Blessed Virgin, of whom he is thought to have learned certain particulars which she only could communicate; these are what relate to the incarnation, birth, and infancy of our Lord.

(1) Troas is the name of that country of which ancient Troy was the capital. From the manner in which Troas is mentioned in Scripture there can be no doubt but there was also a city of that name, situated on the sea-coast nearly half a league from the ruins of Troy.

(2) The Jews could not sacrifice the paschal lamb except in Jerusalem; but they everywhere kept the solemnity of the Azymes, or unleavened bread, as they do even now.

(3) The first day of the week had already taken the place of the Sabbath, and was for Christians the day of the Lord; still it had not, as yet, received the name of *Sabbath*, but it soon after did, since we find it thus named in the Apocalypse (i. 10).

(4) That is to say, that after the eating of the Eucharistic bread, St. Paul took some refreshment, according to the custom of those early times, when the faithful, after having communicated, partook together of a frugal repast, which was called *agapas*, a Greek word signifying *charity*.

(5) Assos, a maritime city of Troas. Mitylene, a considerable town of the island of Lesbos, whence that Island derived the name of Metelinus, which it still retains. Chios and Samos, two of the islands of the Greek Archipelago.

and the day following we came to Miletus. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, lest he should be stayed any time in Asia. For he hasted, if it were possible for him, to keep the day of Pentecost (1) at Jerusalem. And sending from Miletus to Ephesus, he called the ancients (2) of the Church. And when they were come to him, and were together, he said to them: You know (3) from the first day that I came into Asia, in what manner I have been with you for all the time" that I remained there; "serving the Lord with all humility, and with tears, and temptations, which befel me by the conspiracies of the Jews." You likewise know that "I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have preached it to you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house. Testifying both to Jews and Gentiles" the necessity of "penance towards God, and faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST. And now behold, being bound (4) in the spirit, I go to Jerusalem, not knowing (5) the

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(1) St. Paul went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Christian, and not the Jewish Pentecost. Such is the opinion of St. Epiphanius, and, after him, many ecclesiastical writers. If it be objected, that the Christian Pentecost could be celebrated in any place, we can reply that the Christians must naturally feel much greater devotion when celebrating it in the very room wherein the Holy Ghost had descended upon the first disciples.

(2) Bishops and priests, for it appears that those of the neighboring cities were also summoned thither on this occasion. It was impossible that the entire body of the faithful could transport themselves from one city to another, when their presence was not even necessary. The apostle labored effectually for their sanctification, when he labored to effect that of their pastors.

(3) This discourse of St. Paul is, for the most part, a eulogium on his own conduct in Ephesus. The saints see so clearly that whatever good they do comes from God, that they can never be tempted to appropriate to themselves the glory thereof. Secure from this danger, the apostle listens only to his charity, which urges him to do what will be most efficacious in procuring for the Church worthy ministers: setting before them example, at all times better than precept. That example is his own, because his conscience bears testimony that he has nothing to reproach himself with, and also because, being their first apostle, and hitherto their only pastor, he had no other example to place before them.

(4) Some understand this as having reference to the chains wherewith he was to be bound in Jerusalem, which were already present to him by anticipation. Others think that *bound in the spirit* signifies that St. Paul was impelled towards Jerusalem by the Spirit of God, as by an impetuous wind which so urged him on that he could neither stop nor turn aside. In this sense, *bound in the Spirit* would signify *forced by the Spirit.*

(5) He knew it not in detail, nor yet whether persecution was to go so far as putting him to death.

things which shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost in every city (1) witnesseth to me, saying: that bands and afflictions wait for me at Jerusalem. But I fear none of these things, neither do I count my life more precious than myself (2), so that I may consummate my course, and the ministry of the word which I received from the Lord JESUS, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. And now behold I know that all you among whom I have gone (3) preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more (4). Wherefore I take you to witness this day that I am clear from the blood of all men. For I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

Then addressing himself to the bishops, and probably to them alone, to whom the Council of Trent (5) also applies the following words, exclusive of all other ministers, he continues thus:

"Take heed to yourselves (6) and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God,

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(1) We have already seen that the gift of prophecy was common in those primitive times, and that wherever there were Christians, prophets were also found.

(2) What could he mean by *himself*, as distinguished from *his life*, and which he seems to consider of greater importance, if it be not his immortal soul, which, by the loss of temporal life, was to enter upon the possession of a life of eternal happiness?

(3) *You among whom I have gone.* These are the words from which the inference has been drawn that besides the pastors of the church of Ephesus, St. Paul summoned to Miletus those of the adjoining cities.

(4) Yet St. Paul, writing some years after to the Philippians, tells them that he hopes to see them soon, and there are certain passages in his epistles which give us to understand that he did return again to the East. This has caused some commentators to think that he merely spoke from conjecture when he told the Ephesians that they should see him no more; but he speaks too positively for us to believe that he only expressed a supposition. *I know*, says he; which leaves little room for doubt but that the thing had been revealed to him; and it is admitted by all that he might easily have returned to Philippi without touching at Ephesus.

(5) Sess. vi., cap. 1, of Reform.

(6) *If a man know not how to rule his own house*, says the apostle in another place, *how shall he take care of the Church of God?* (1 Tim., iii. 5). Still less can he do it who knows not how to govern himself. This advice is applicable to every time, and to all pastors; but here he recommends to them redoubled vigilance and attention. He warns them of persecutions and temptations near at hand. It is also certain that the flock were not to be exclusively cared for, but the pastors were likewise to mind *themselves*. Pastors though they be, they are still men, subject, like other men, to doubt and infirmity; the difference is only in degree.

which he hath purchased with his own blood (1)." This vigilance will now be more than ever necessary; for (2) "I know that after my departure ravening wolves (3) will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch," after my example, "keeping in memory that for three years I ceased not with tears to admonish every one of you, night and day. And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace (4);" to that God "who is able to build up" what is now commenced, "and to give" you part in "an inheritance among all the sanctified."

It seems as if nothing were wanting to complete this picture of a good pastor. We here find all the features which characterize true zeal: universal, for it had embraced all in general, and each in particular; constant, since it had never relaxed during all that long period of time which St. Paul had passed in those provinces; firm and immovable, for it had withstood all the efforts of persecution; indefatigable, for it impelled him to labor night and day; tender, for his admonitions were rather prayers, which he accompanied with his tears. Is there any thing impracticable for zeal such as this? Nevertheless, it might have lost its efficacy had one quality been wanting, that is, disinterestedness. Avarice, whether it be really apparent, or only suspected, degrades a pastor to a contemptible degree; but perfect disinterestedness gives him a strength and a power to which men offer the less opposition, inasmuch as they are themselves the more interested. This noble virtue shone pre-eminently

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(1) In the Greek it is by his *own* blood (in the French it is *par son sang*, by his blood). If Jesus Christ be not God, who, then, is the God who has purchased the Church by *his own blood?*

(2) This *for* is not in the Latin, but it is in the Greek. It serves to connect the context with what goes before, and appears to determine the meaning as we have taken it.

(3) These *ravening wolves* are the avowed persecutors; those who *speak perverse things* are the heretics. These, taken together, are the two great trials which the Church has to undergo; they are coeval with her own existence, and shall end only with herself.

(4) That is to say, the word of the Gospel, which the apostle, as it were, personifies; referring them to that word as to a master that will direct them in all things, and sustain them by the grace which accompanies its instructions. Some think that *the word of his grace* meant simply *his grace*, according to a common Hebrew idiom.

in St. Paul, above all the other apostles. We may, therefore, judge with what confidence and what authority he could add what follows:

"I have not coveted any man's silver, gold, or apparel, as you yourselves know; for such things as were needful for me and them that are with me, these hands have furnished (1). I have showed you all things (2), how that so laboring, you ought to support the weak, and to remember the word of the Lord JESUS, how he said: *It is a more blessed thing to give, rather than to receive* (3)."

"And when he had said these things, kneeling down he prayed with them all. And there was much weeping among them all; and falling on the neck of Paul, they kissed him, being grieved most of all for the word which he had said, that they should see his face no more. And they brought him on his way to the ship."

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(1) Either the trade at which St. Paul worked was very lucrative, since it served to maintain so many persons, or else the fare of those apostolic men was very frugal. The last conjecture is, undoubtedly, the most probable.

(2) St. Paul wished that all should see him work, so that it might be well understood that he lived by the labor of his own hands. Otherwise it might have been suspected that he was supported by the secret contributions of the faithful, and in this the apostle would have been no ways reprehensible; but then the weak might have been scandalized, imagining that he was more or less actuated by these interested motives in prosecuting the work of his mission; hence the purity of his motives and intentions might have been called in question, and a doubt thrown on that perfect disinterestedness which he wished to make clearly manifest. It is in this sense he says, that in *laboring, he complied with the weak.*

(3) This word has been superadded to the Gospel text. St. Paul must have learned it from some of those who had heard it from the sacred lips of Jesus Christ; for it is not found in any of the four Gospels. It has been said that the meaning is found there, and that it is in this way St. Paul quotes it, clothing it in his own words; such, however, is not the case, for a very little reflection on the manner in which St. Paul expresses it, will suffice to show that he quotes the very words of our divine Redeemer.

CHAPTER XXI.

PROPHECY OF AGABUS.—ST. PAUL IN JERUSALEM.—HE IS ARRESTED BY THE JEWS.—THE TRIBUNE LYSIUS WITHDRAWS HIM FROM THEIR CUSTODY.

(*a*) "And when it came to pass that being parted from them we set sail, we came with a straight course to Coos (1), and the day following to Rhodes, and from thence to Patara. And when we had found a ship sailing over to Phenicia, we went aboard and set forth. And when we had discovered Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand, we sailed into Syria, and came to Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days; who said to Paul through the Spirit (2) that he should not go up to Jerusalem. And the days being expired, departing we went forward, they all bringing us on our way, with their wives and children, till we were out of the city; and we kneeled down on the shore, and we prayed. And when we had bid one another farewell, we took ship; and they returned home. But we, having finished the voyage by sea, from Tyre came down to Ptolemais (3); and saluting the brethren, we abode one day with them. And the next day, departing we came to Cesarea. And entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven (4), we

(*a*) Acts, xxi. 1.

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(1) *Coos*, now *Stanchio*, a considerable island in the Archipelago, being one of those which were formerly called the Cyclades. It was the birth-place of Hippocrates, the prince of physicians; and also of Apelles, the greatest painter of antiquity. Rhodes is so well known that it requires no comment. *Patara*, now *Patera*, a maritime town of ancient Lycia; it was the birth-place of St. Nicholas.

(2) The Holy Ghost revealed to them the persecutions which Paul was to undergo. While predicting them, they admonished him not to expose himself to such danger; this they did of their own accord, for the Holy Ghost willed that he should expose himself on that occasion; but he allowed them to speak so, because their intention was good, and because it made St. Paul still more meritorious, by rejecting their friendly warning.

(3) Since called St. John d'Acre, a city celebrated in the time of the Crusades for the numerous sieges which it underwent.

(4) One of the seven deacons, the same who is spoken of in the sixth and eighth chapters.



abode with him. And he had four daughters, virgins, who did prophesy (1)."

"And as we tarried there for some days, there came from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus (2), who when he was come to us, took Paul's girdle, and binding his own feet and hands (3), he said: Thus saith the Holy Ghost: The man whose girdle this is, the Jews shall bind in this manner in Jerusalem, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. Which when we had heard, both we and they that were of that place, desired him (4) that he would not go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered and said: What do you mean, weeping and afflicting my heart (5)? For I am ready, not only to be bound, but to die also in Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord JESUS. And when we could not persuade him, we ceased, saying: The will of the Lord be done. And after those days, being prepared, we went up to Jerusalem. And there went also with us some of the disciples from Cesarea, bringing with them one Mnason, a Cyprian, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge."

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(1) This was the accomplishment of that prophecy of Joel, quoted by St. Peter: *Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.* These young women were virgins, and, therefore, the more fit to receive celestial inspiration. The Church recognizes them as saints, and St. Jerome, writing against Jovinian, remarks with reference to them, that the profession of virginity was coeval with Christianity itself.

(2) The same who had foretold the famine which happened in the reign of Claudius, as related in chap. ii.

(3) It was not unusual for the prophets to accompany their words by some exterior action which rendered their predictions more sensible. These actions were no less inspired than were the words themselves, as we see by the examples of Isaias, of Jeremiah, of Ezechiel, &c.

(4) St. Paul had consented that the brethren should convey him out of Damascus by lowering him in a basket from the walls of the city; he had also yielded to the advice of his friends, when they urged him not to venture into the theatre at Ephesus: but now neither prayers nor tears can move him from his purpose of going to brave all the fury of the Jews. It was the will of God that he should elude persecution on the two preceding occasions, and that he should now meet it face to face. These opposite decrees of God, being known to him, caused him to act with such apparent inconsistency. This remark is from St. Chrysostom.

(5) He was insensible to the sufferings which he was to undergo, but not to the affliction which they gave to his brethren. If it is amiable to have such exquisite sensibility, how noble it is to be able to subdue it! His love for Jesus was greater than that wherewith he loved his brethren, though them he loved more than himself.

"And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following, Paul went in with us unto James (1); and all the ancients were assembled (2). Whom when we had saluted, he related particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry: but they hearing it, glorified God."

Nevertheless as it was necessary to put a stop to a species of scandal which, though it had no other foundation than some idle rumors, might still have some effect in retarding the progress of the Gospel, they added the following: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands (3) there are among the Jews that have believed; and they are all zealots for the law. Now they have heard of thee that thou teachest those Jews who are among the Gentiles, to depart from Moses; saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor walk according to the custom. What is it, therefore," that must be done? "The multitude must needs come together, for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee. We have four men who have a vow on them (4); take these and

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(1) James the *Less*, he who is called the brother of our Lord. All the other apostles were dispersed. He was the only one who remained in Jerusalem, of which he had been appointed bishop; thus the first bishop was also the first who remained stationary in charge of his mission. St. Paul paid this tribute of honor to his dignity and sanctity. It was about five years after this that St. James the *Less* was precipitated, and afterwards killed by the Jews, in hatred of Christianity. After the perpetration of that crime, Jerusalem had no more apostles.

(2) The clergy of Jerusalem. The Greek word signifies both ancients and priests.

(3) In Greek, how many *myriads*. A myriad was equal to ten thousand, which shows that the Christian Jews were very numerous in Jerusalem. When St. Paul says, speaking of the Jews: "If *some* amongst them have been unfaithful," this expression, taken literally, would lead us to believe that the unbelievers were the minority: but not so, for the great mass of the people remained in incredulity: still this mode of speaking gives us to understand that a very considerable number had embraced the faith.

(4) The vow of the Nazarenes, of which we have already spoken. This vow was one of pure devotion, but that devotion was instituted by God himself, as we see by the sixth chapter of the Book of Numbers. By making and fulfilling this vow, St. Paul, therefore, displayed a greater attachment to Judaism than if he had merely done what was strictly commanded; so, amongst us, to make a vow of observing the counsels indicates a more devoted Christian than merely to obey the precepts. It was another proof of zeal for the practices of Judaism to defray, as St. Paul did, the expenses of those who performed this devotion with him. This was by no means unusual amongst the Jews,

sanctify thyself with them; and bestow on them that they may shave their heads; and all will know that the things which they have heard of thee are false: but that thou thyself also walkest, keeping the law. But as touching the Gentiles that believe, we have written, decreeing that they should only refrain themselves from that which has been offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication," without exacting any more from them.

We have already spoken of St. Paul's dispositions with regard to the law: he looked upon it as abolished, but yet not condemned. Consequently, it was to him a matter of indifference whether he observed it or not, unless where the interest of his neighbor was at stake. His conduct, in this respect, had ever been in accordance with his sentiments, and so it was on this occasion, when he showed at the same time his respect for the advice of his brethren, and his condescension towards the weak and imperfect.

He "took," therefore, "the men" who had made the vow, "and the next day, being purified with them, entered into the temple, giving notice of the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an oblation should be offered for every one of them. But when the seven days were drawing to an end, those Jews that were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands upon him, crying out: Men of Israel, help: this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and moreover hath brought in Gentiles into the temple, and hath violated this holy place. (For they had seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And the whole city was in an uproar; and the people ran together. And taking Paul, they drew him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut."

These scrupulous observers of the law were afraid lest the temple should be desecrated by the effusion of human blood. Hence their haste in taking him out, and then closing up the temple, lest he might escape from their hands, and re-enter the holy place. Having

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and we see it now-a-days imitated by those who make pilgrimages for others at their own expense

arranged with this scruple, "they went about to kill him," and "it was told the tribune of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion. Who forthwith taking with him soldiers and centurions, ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they left off beating Paul. Then the tribune coming near, took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains (1); and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude. And when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle (2). And when he was come to the stairs, it fell out that he was carried by the soldiers, because of the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying: Away with him."

"And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith to the tribune" in the Greek tongue, "May I speak something to thee? Who said: Canst thou speak Greek? Art thou not that Egyptian (3)," he added, "who before these days didst raise a tumult, and didst lead forth into the desert four thousand men that were murderers? But Paul said to him: I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. And I beseech thee suffer me to speak to

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(1) According to the prophecy of Agabus, whereby we learn that St. Paul had his hands tied with one of these chains, and his feet with the other. It was, doubtless, because of the chain on his feet that the soldiers were obliged to carry St. Paul up the steps of the castle, as otherwise he could not ascend fast enough to escape the multitude pressing on behind.

(2) The castle of Antonia, according to all the interpreters. It was adjacent to the temple, and from the highest of its towers there was a view of what passed therein. It was much embellished and fortified anew by Herod the Great. He gave it the name of Antonia, in honor of Mark Antony, who was then his patron. The Romans, when they had subjugated Judea, established a garrison in the fortress, which served to accommodate the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and strangers who came in to assist at the grand solemnities.

(3) Josephus, and after him, Eusebius, speaks of this Egyptian who came out from Egypt with four thousand men, but whose band was increased, as they say, to thirty thousand. He was a false prophet and a magician, who had made his followers believe that with a single word he could throw down the walls of Jerusalem. Felix sent troops against him, when a number of his people were slain, and the rest taken prisoners. He himself disappeared during the contest, and it was never known what became of him. Of course, the victors would have been well pleased to capture him; and the tribune, judging by the fury of the people, very naturally conjectured that St. Paul might be this impostor, so justly and so universally detested.

the people. And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with his hand to the people. And a great silence being made, he spoke unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying:"

CHAPTER XXII.

DISCOURSE OF ST. PAUL TO THE JEWS.—THE TRIBUNE CONDEMNS HIM TO THE LASH.—HE DECLARES HIMSELF A ROMAN CITIZEN.

(*a*) "MEN, brethren, and fathers," said this intrepid man, unawed by the stormy scene before him, "hear ye the account which I now give unto you. (And when they heard that he spoke unto them in the Hebrew tongue, they kept the more silence.) And he saith: I," who speak to you, "am a Jew; born at Tarsus, in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet (1) of Gamaliel (2), taught according to the truth of the law of the fathers, zealous for the law, as also all you are this day. Who persecuted this way unto death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As the high-priest (3) doth bear me witness, and all the ancients (4); from whom also receiving letters to the brethren, I went to Damascus, that I might bring them bound from thence to Jerusalem to be pun-

(*a*) Acts, xxii. 1.

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(1) Masters, in every country, occupy seats higher than those of their pupils; this was especially the case in the East, where the pupils, or disciples, are seated on carpets or mats on the floor. Hence arose that figure of speech, *to approach the feet of any one*, meaning to become his disciple. In this way is explained that text, Deut., xxxiii. 3: *They who approach to his feet shall receive of his doctrine.* This is what Mary did, when *sitting at the Lord's feet*, she *heard his word* (St. Luke, x. 39).

(2) This Gamaliel is the same who was mentioned in chap. v.

(3) The high-priest here referred to, was not the same who then held office; whether it was that St. Paul was unaware that this dignity had devolved on another, or that he took it for granted that his hearers understood him in the sense we have given.

(4) The Greek word, which the Vulgate here gives as *the ancients*, literally signifies the *sacerdotal senate*.

ished. And it came to pass, as I was going, and drawing nigh to Damascus at mid-day (1), that suddenly from heaven there shone round about me a great light. And falling on the ground, I heard a voice saying to me: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered: Who art thou, Lord? And he said to me: I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spoke with me (2). And I said: What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me: Arise, and go to Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things that thou must do. And whereas I did not see for the brightness of that light, being led by the hand by my companions, I came to Damascus. And one Ananias, a man according to the law, having testimony of all the Jews who dwelt there, coming to me, and standing by me, said to me: Brother Saul, look up. And I the same hour looked upon him (3). But he said: The God of our fathers hath pre-ordained thee that thou shouldst know his will, and see the Just One (4), and shouldst hear the voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness to all men of those things which thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Rise up, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins (5), invoking his name."

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(1) The circumstance of the hour of mid-day, of which we find no mention at chap. ix., is far from being useless here. It goes to prove that this light came indeed from heaven, and was miraculous. We frequently see during the night very brilliant lights, formed of the exhalations from the earth, when they become inflamed and ignite in the air; but this dazzling light which was seen by St. Paul appeared in the middle of the day, and must, therefore, have been supernatural.

(2) He here declares which voice it was that they did not hear. It was the voice of *him that spoke with him;* they must have heard the voice of St. Paul, since it is said in chap. ix. that they heard a voice. See note 3 of page 627.

(3) He looked up, and saw him, because at the first word spoken by Ananias, he had miraculously recovered his sight. This fact, here casually mentioned, is given in detail in chap. ix.

(4) Jesus Christ, who is called the Just One by excellence, because he is essentially just, and that all justice is derived from his, according to that saying of St. Paul: Jesus has been made our justice and our sanctification.

(5) *Wash away thy sins by baptism,* 1st, as regards the fault, if the dispositions are not sufficiently good to effect the justification before the reception of the sacrament; 2d, as regards the temporal punishment still due for these sins although they be forgiven. It is the peculiar effect of baptism to wash away the traces of sin, and remit the tem-

My sole desire was to communicate this great blessing to my brethren; but "it came to pass when I was come again to Jerusalem, and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance, and saw" the Lord, "saying unto me: Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; because they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said: Lord," they cannot doubt my testimony; "they know that I cast into prison and beat in every synagogue them that believed in thee. And when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I stood by and consented, and kept the garments of them that killed him. And" the Lord "said to me: Go, for unto the Gentiles afar off will I send thee (1)."

It was neither through dislike of his own people, nor any predilection in favor of the Gentiles, that St. Paul went to preach the Gospel to the nations, but solely in virtue of a divine commission, and by the express command of his Master. An announcement so proper to appease the people did but exasperate them still more. "They heard him until this word, and then lifted up their voice, saying: Away with such an one from the earth (2); for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out and threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air (3), the tribune commanded him

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poral punishment. The desire of baptism, joined to the justifying dispositions, do not produce this effect, unless the sacrament be really conferred and received. Such is the common opinion of theologians.

(1) St. Paul, since his conversion, has visited Jerusalem three times, and the commentators are at a loss to know on which of these occasions he had this vision. It is plain that it was not in his third visit, which he was then making; and it appears to us more than probable that it was in the first, since it was immediately after that first visit that he commenced preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, for whom he had just received his mission.

(2) St. Peter, who bitterly reproached them, yet converted thousands—while St. Paul, though addressing them with all possible mildness, does but excite their anger. The reason of these two different results may be found by the difference of vocation. *He*, says St. Paul, *who wrought in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, wrought in me also among the Gentiles* (Gal., ii. 8). It is not that St. Peter did not sometimes announce the Gospel to the Gentiles, and St. Paul to the Jews. Neither was their preaching altogether fruitless on those occasions; but still the main success was attached to the special vocations. This would seem to be the meaning of those words which we have just read: *They will not receive thy testimony concerning me....unto the Gentiles will I send thee.*

(3) This might be their usual mode of expressing indignation or execration; or pos-

to be brought into the castle, and that he should be scourged and tortured; to know for what cause they did so cry out against him."

He was ignorant of it, because he did not understand the language in which St. Paul spoke; and, as we have already remarked, he judged the accused party by the fury of his accusers. Hence it was that he treated him with so little respect; but it was not long till he changed his conduct towards him. "When they had" already "bound him with thongs (1), Paul saith to the centurion that stood by him: Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman (2), and uncondemned? Which the centurion hearing, went to the tribune, and told him, saying: What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman citizen. And the tribune coming, said to him: Tell me, art thou a Roman? But he said: Yea. And the tribune answered: I obtained the being free of this city with a great sum. And Paul said: But I was born so. Immediately, therefore, they departed from him that were about to torture him. The tribune, also, was afraid (3), after he understood that he was a Roman citizen, and because he had bound him. But on the next day, meaning to know more diligently for what cause he was accused by the Jews, he loosed him, and commanded the priests to come together, and all the council; and bringing forth Paul, he set him before them."

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sibly they might have meant to call for lapidation, of which they judged St. Paul worthy, and were ready to commence the work of death, provided the tribune did not prevent them.

(1) The person who was to undergo this punishment was fastened with thongs to a stake.

(2) We have before alluded to the means taken by St. Paul on this occasion in order to avoid a punishment at once cruel and ignominious.

(3) His fear, and that of the magistrates of Philippi, mentioned in chap. xvi., makes known to us that it was a perilous thing to ill-use a Roman citizen. The emperors publicly declared themselves the avengers of such insult or outrage offered to a citizen of the empire, and it was not long before that for a like offence the emperor Claudius had deprived the Rhodians of their franchise. If a whole nation had been thus severely punished, what had not a single individual to fear?

CHAPTER XXIII.

ST. PAUL STRUCK, BY ORDER OF THE HIGH PRIEST.—HE CURSES HIM, AND EXCUSES HIMSELF FOR SO DOING.—DISPUTE BETWEEN THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.—CONSPIRACY AGAINST ST. PAUL.—HE IS SENT TO CESAREA.

(*a*) "And Paul, looking upon the council, said: Men, brethren, I have conversed with all good conscience (1) before God, until this present day." He was about to continue, when "the high-priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to strike him on the mouth (2). Then Paul said to him: God shall strike thee (3), thou whited wall. For sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and contrary to the law commandest me to be struck?"

"And they that stood by," whether they struck him as they were commanded, or whether they did not, is not written, but they "said: Dost thou revile the high-priest of God? And Paul said: I knew not, brethren, that he is the high-priest (4). For it is written: *Thou shalt not speak evil of the prince of thy people* (5)."

(*a*) Acts, xxiii. 1.

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(1) St. Paul had always followed the dictates of his conscience, whether as a Jew, or as a Christian. The first of these consciences was erroneous, the second enlightened and correct. It was easy for him to justify the latter, and for the former his adversaries could not blame him. By this we see that he had ever been an upright and righteous man, and by this means God had been moved to compassionate his errors. We derive this idea from St. Paul himself, who, after having spoken of the excesses which preceded his conversion, adds (1 Tim. i. 13): "But I obtained the mercy of God, *because* I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

(2) When those who were interrogated by the magistrates forgot the respect due to them, they were struck on the face by certain officials who stood near for that purpose. In this instance we cannot see how St. Paul gave offence in his opening words, and we can only conclude that the order to strike him was the effect of savage fury.

(3) This was a prophecy, if it be true, as people think, that this Ananias is the same who was massacred, together with his brother, by a rival faction of the Jews.

(4) 1st, St. Paul knew him not by *sight*, because he had only recently arrived in Jerusalem, after an absence of several years. 2d, It must have been that the high-priest was not distinguished from the others either by his seat, or by his dress; for, if so, St. Paul could easily have recognized him by either of these marks. This was simply a meeting called by the tribune, wherein the order usual amongst the Jews on such occasions was very possibly disregarded; it might even be that the tribune himself presided over the assembly.

(5) What mildness, after receiving so gross an insult! This sudden transition from

This answer was sufficient to criminate him, supposing he had been aware that he spoke to the high-priest; but, as the case stood, his reply was perfectly just and reasonable. It is sometimes expedient to convince passion and prejudice of their injustice, and this was one of those occasions. Nevertheless, St. Paul saw from this opening that he would have gained little from a formal apology, and he therefore took a shorter and surer way of getting out of his embarrassment. "And Paul, knowing that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, cried out in the council: Men, brethren, I am a Pharisee (1), the son of Pharisees (2): concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead (3) I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension (4) between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit (5); but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry. And some of the Pharisees rising up strove, saying: We find no evil in this man. What if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel? And when there arose a great dissension, the tribune fearing lest Paul should be pulled in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle. And the night following, the Lord standing by him,

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invective to mild apology is so very unlike human nature, that it induced St. Chrysostom to believe that the preceding words were spoken by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

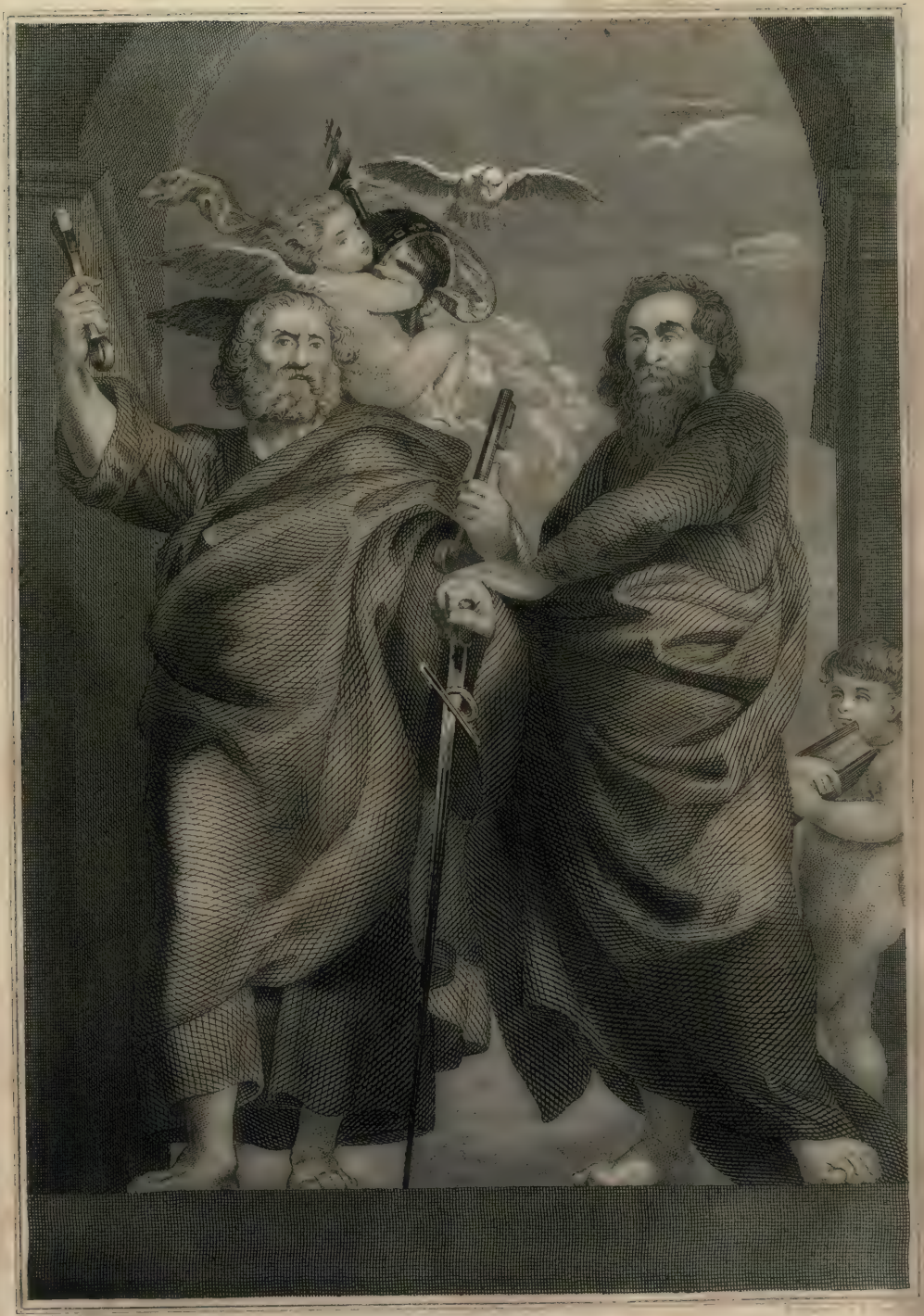
(1) He retained from the Pharisees a belief in the resurrection of the dead, which was the only sound doctrine that they had, but he left them all their vices.

(2) The first idea which these words suggest to the mind, is that the ancestors of St. Paul were Pharisees. Still it may be that the words *filius pharisæorum* signify a disciple or pupil of the Pharisees, by a Hebrew idiom frequently employed.

(3) He said the truth; St. Paul and all the other apostles announced, first of all, the two resurrections, viz., that of Jesus Christ, which is the foundation of Christianity, and ours, which is, as it were, the top of the edifice. They afterwards proposed the intermediate truths.

(4) Union is a good, and dissension is an evil. Nevertheless, when the wicked are united for an evil purpose, it is expedient to divide them, if possible, because sowing dissension between them may frustrate their designs. *The union of the wicked is hurtful*, says St. Gregory, *and must, therefore, be broken up* (Greg., lib. 34, Moral. c. 4).

(5) They did not believe, therefore, in either the spirituality of the soul, or that of God himself. The carnal man ignores all beings but those who have bodies; it was this absurd idea which produced heathenism and materialism—we might also add atheism.





said: Be constant; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome (1)."

"And when day was come, some of the Jews gathered together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying: That they would neither eat nor drink till they killed Paul. And they were more than forty men (2) that had made this conspiracy. Who came," therefore, "to the chief priests and the ancients, and said: We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing till we have slain Paul. Now, therefore, do you with the council signify to the tribune, that he bring him forth to you, as if you meant to know something more certain touching him. And we, before he come near, are ready to kill him. Which when Paul's sister's son had heard of their lying in wait, he came, and entered into the castle, and told Paul."

Assured by the revelation of the Lord that he should testify of him in Rome, Paul doubted not that the plot would fail. A man of ordinary virtue would have been content to remain quiet under those circumstances, and some might suppose that such inaction would have manifested a more perfect faith. But the apostle of nations, whose faith was proof against every trial, knew, moreover, that the divine behests are often executed by human means, and that to neglect these, when they presented themselves, would be nothing better than tempting God, as it would be distrusting him not to believe that these human means failing, he would work miracles rather than suffer his word to fail. Paul, well acquainted with these truths, hastened to avail himself of the means within his reach. "Calling to him one of the centurions," he "said to him: Bring this

(1) It had been already revealed to St. Paul that he should go to Rome, as we have seen, chap. xix., ver. 21. The announcement is here confirmed to him by Jesus Christ in person; and because he has testified of him in Jerusalem, he promises that he shall likewise testify of him in Rome. One trial is repaid by another, and a contest shall be the reward of a contest. Thus God rewards the merit of his generous servants by giving them fresh opportunities of obtaining merit; thus he multiplies their victories, and enriches their crowns.

(2) It is believed, and with much probability, that these conspirators were Sadducees; that is to say, materialists. When these people find themselves sufficiently strong, they say, speaking of their adversaries: They must be got rid of; when they are weak, their cry is for liberty: Let every one have liberty to think for himself.

young man to the tribune, for he hath something to tell him. And he, taking him, brought him to the tribune, and said: Paul, the prisoner, desired me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say to thee. And the tribune, taking him by the hand, went aside with him privately, and asked him: What is it that thou hast to tell me? And he said: The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldst bring forth Paul to-morrow into the council, as if they meant to inquire something more certain touching him. But do not thou give credit to them; for there lie in wait for him more than forty men of them, who have bound themselves by oath neither to eat nor to drink till they have killed him; and they are now ready, looking for a promise from thee."

"The tribune, therefore, dismissed the young man, charging him that he should tell no man that he had made known these things unto him. Then having called two centurions, he said to them: Make ready two hundred soldiers to go as far as Cesarea, and seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen (1), for the third hour of the night; and provide beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe to Felix the governor. (For he feared lest perhaps the Jews might take him away by force and kill him, and he should afterwards be slandered as if he was to take money.) And he wrote a letter after this manner: Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix, greeting: This man being taken by the Jews, and ready to be killed by them, I rescued, coming in with an army, understanding that he is a Roman (2). And meaning to know the cause which they objected unto him, I brought him forth into their council. Whom I found to be accused concerning questions of their

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(1) God had decreed it so that St. Paul should not be the victim of these ruffians. We see what an escort he provided for him, without appearing at all to act: a monarch could not have had a more numerous or a stronger guard; let us admire and adore his providence.

(2) This was a falsehood: at the time when he delivered Paul from their hands, he knew not yet that he was a Roman citizen, but he knew how to enhance the merit of his action in the eyes of his superiors. A little reflection will convince us that self-love induces us to do such things very frequently. A similar prevarication, provided it seems to benefit ourselves, will flow from the lips or from the pen like water from its source; nay, it suffices if the falsehood presents itself with a witty saying, it will be given rather than the plain, unadorned truth.

law; but having nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bands. And when I was told of ambushes that they had prepared for him, I sent him to thee, signifying also to his accusers to plead before thee. Farewell."

"Then the soldiers, according as it was commanded them, taking Paul, brought him by night to Antipatris (1). And the next day, leaving the horsemen to go with him, they returned to the castle. Who when they were come to Cesarea, and had delivered the letter to the governor, did also present Paul before him. And when he had read it, and had asked of what province he was, and understood that he was of Cilicia: I will hear thee, said he, when thy accusers come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall."

CHAPTER XXIV.

ACCUSATION OF ST. PAUL BEFORE FELIX, AND HIS DEFENCE.

(*a*) "And after five days (2), the high-priest Ananias came down, with some of the ancients, and one Tertullus (3) an orator, who went to the governor" to speak "against Paul. And Paul being called

(*a*) Acts, xxiv. 1.

(1) This is thought to be the ancient Capharsalama, mentioned in the first book of Machabees, chap. vii., ver. 31. It was rebuilt by Herod the Great, who called it Antipatros, from the name of his father, Antipater. It was seated on the Mediterranean, midway between Joppa and Cesarea. It was reckoned seventeen leagues from Jerusalem to Antipatris: such a distance could not well be made in one night, so that when St. Luke speaks of the soldiers returning next day, he must compute the days from one evening to the other, according to a mode of calculation very common amongst the Jews, and authorized by Scripture.

(2) *After five days* from the beginning of this affair, that is to say, five days after the arrest of St. Paul in Jerusalem, which added to the seven days that he had previously been in that city, make up the twelve days mentioned by him, ver. 11.

(3) This is a Latin name. It is very probable that Tertullus was a Jew born in Rome, who had been brought to Jerusalem by the Jews for the purpose of advocating their

for, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying: Whereas through thee we live in much peace, and many things are rectified by thy providence, we accept it always and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thanksgiving. But that I be no further tedious to thee, I desire thee of thy clemency to hear us in few words. We have found this to be a pestilent man, and raising seditions among all the Jews throughout the world, and author of the sedition of the sect of the Nazarenes. Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we having apprehended, would also have judged according to our law (1). But Lysias the tribune, coming upon us with great violence, took him away out of our hands; commanding his accusers to come to thee: of whom thou mayest thyself, by examination, have knowledge (2) of all these things whereof we accuse him. And the Jews also added, and said that these things were so."

"Then Paul answered (the governor making a sign to him to speak): Knowing that for many years thou hast been judge (3) over this nation, I will with good courage answer for myself. For thou mayest understand that there are yet but twelve days since I

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cause with the governors, who, being Romans, understood neither Hebrew nor Syriac. We see by the way in which he opens his harangue, that this man was an orator by profession.

(1) Not so; their purpose was to kill him immediately, and without any form of trial. The whole of this discourse is a tissue of falsehoods, but we only notice this one, because St. Paul himself refuted all the others.

(2) *Of whom* thou mayest, thyself, have knowledge, that is to say, either from Paul or from Lysias; the phrase is ambiguous, but it appears more reasonable to apply it to Lysias. Felix himself appears to have understood it so, since he closed the session by those words: *When Lysias the tribune shall come down I will hear you.*

(3) *Judge* here means governor. The Jews were in the habit of giving the name of judge to the magistrate who had the supreme administration of affairs. This custom might have come down from the time of their first judges, whose government had preceded that of the kings. It is certain that in authority these judges were at least dictators.

St. Paul says that he will plead his cause with more confidence, *knowing that* Felix has been for many years judge over the nation. The connection is here inexplicable to us, and the more so, as the administration of Felix had been but one series of injustice, murder, and rapine. Nevertheless, although we cannot understand it, St. Paul must have had some rational motive for confidence, since he speaks in this way; except that this was merely meant for a compliment, and assuredly St. Paul was not apt to pay compliments.

went up to adore in Jerusalem. And neither in the temple did they find me disputing with any man, or causing any concourse of the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: neither can they prove unto thee the things whereof they now accuse me. But this I confess to thee, that according to the sect which they call heresy (1), so I serve the Father and my God, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets; having hope in God, which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust. And herein (2) do I endeavor to have always a conscience without offence towards God and towards men. Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings, and vows. In which I was found purified in the temple; neither with multitude nor with tumult." For the rest, they who found me there, are "certain Jews from Asia, who ought to have been here before thee (3), and to accuse, if they had any thing against me: or let these men themselves say if they found in me any iniquity, when standing before their council, except it be for this one voice only, that I cried standing among them: Concerning the resurrection of the dead am I judged this day by you."

This challenge made it necessary for his accusers either to prove their charge, or remain silent. It appears that, having no proof to bring forward, they were reduced to silence. "And Felix put them off, having most certain knowledge of this way (4), saying: When Lysias the tribune shall come down I will hear you."

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(1) The words *sect* and *heresy* had not always amongst the Jews the precise meaning which we now give to them; still they sometimes had, especially that of *heresy*, which may be seen by the way in which St. Paul employs it.

(2) That is, *in the hope of the resurrection*. Let us, too, keep this hope before our eyes, since so great an apostle did not consider it unworthy of his virtue to make use of its assistance in order to preserve his conscience from all stain.

(3) St. Paul skilfully avails himself of the absence of these Jews from Asia; that is to say, from Ephesus. These were, in fact, the first, or rather the only witnesses who ought to be heard, because they were the first to recognize him in the temple, to lay hands upon him, and to excite the people to rise up against him. Yet these men acted prudently in not appearing. Who knows but Felix might have ordered a judicial investigation, when it would be found that they had been the authors and abettors of the sedition, and they be punished accordingly? An iniquitous judge is at all times dreaded by the wicked when they know that he has no interest in being unjust.

(4) *This way*, that is to say, Christianity. Felix knew, at least, that they who professed it led irreproachable lives.

He had discovered the innocence of the accused; but being unwilling to offend his accusers, he steered a middle course between justice and injustice. Instead of acquitting Paul, and sending him forth free, as he should have done, "he commanded a centurion to keep him;" but he told him at the same time, "that he should be easy, and that he should not prohibit any of his friends to minister unto him."

"And after some days, Felix coming with Drusilla (1) his wife, who was a Jew, sent for Paul, and heard of him the faith that is in CHRIST JESUS. And as he treated of justice (2), and chastity, and of the judgment to come, Felix being terrified, answered: For this time go thy way; but when I have a convenient time I will send for thee. Hoping also withal that money should be given him by Paul; for which cause also oftentimes sending for him, he spoke with him. But when two years were ended, Felix had for successor Portius Festus. And Felix being willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound (3)."

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(1) Drusilla was born in the Jewish religion, but of the Idumean race, being of the family of the Herods. Her father was the first Agrippa, spoken of under the name of Herod in chap. xii., the same who beheaded St. James and imprisoned St. Peter. Drusilla had been first married to Azisus, king of Emesus. Felix, becoming enamored of her beauty, solicited her to bestow herself on him. She consented, and leaving her royal husband, became the paramour of a freedman. Azisus became a Jew, in order to obtain her hand: she became a pagan with Felix. It was through curiosity that she desired to hear St. Paul, and hence she derived no profit from hearing him. Suetonius says of Felix that he had been the husband of three queens, but we know not who the others were. Drusilla perished in an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, together with a son named Agrippa, whom she had had by Felix. This eruption was the same which proved fatal to Pliny, the naturalist, and which buried the city of Herculaneum.

(2) We here recognize the magnanimity of St. Paul. His life was at the disposal of Felix, yet he dares to speak to him on the two points the most likely to excite his anger, that is to say, chastity and justice.

Had he stopped there, his words would have made but a slight impression. The finest code of morals would be no more than an idle speculation, were it not accompanied by the representation of an inevitable judgment, wherein virtue shall be rewarded and vice punished.

Felix trembled, and this fear was for him the beginning of grace; his terror made him impose silence on St. Paul, and that was the end of it.

(3) If St. Paul had given him money, he would have set him free; and because he wished to conciliate the Jews, he left him in chains. He was unjust, and yet he gained nothing by it, neither money—for St. Paul gave him none—nor the favor of the Jews,

CHAPTER XXV.

ST. PAUL ARRAIGNED BEFORE FESTUS.—HE DEFENDS HIMSELF, AND APPEALS TO CÆSAR.—AGRIPPA AND BERNICE DESIRE TO HEAR HIM.

(*a*) "Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he went up to Jerusalem from Cesarea (1). And the chief priests, and principal men of the Jews, went unto him against Paul: and they besought him, requesting favor against him, that he would command him to be brought to Jerusalem, laying wait to kill him in the way. But Festus answered that Paul was kept in Cesarea; and that he himself would very shortly depart thither. Let them, therefore, saith he, among you that are able, go down with me and accuse him, if there be any crime in the man. And having tarried among them no more than eight or ten days, he went down to Cesarea, and the next day" after his arrival, "he sat in the judgment-seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. Who being brought, the Jews stood about him, who were come down from Jerusalem, objecting many and grievous causes which they could not prove, Paul making answer for himself (2): Neither against the law of the Jews,

(*a*) Acts, xxv. 1.

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for they sent a deputation to Rome to accuse him, in the name of the nation. He would have been disgraced had it not been for the credit of his brother Pallas: these men were Arcadians by birth, and had both been slaves. Pallas having been freed by the emperor Claudius, obtained such an ascendency over the mind of his master, that he became the most influential man in the empire. He very soon got high promotion for his brother Felix, whose freedom he had previously obtained. When they had attained rank and fortune, they failed not, according to custom, to give themselves out as descendants of the ancient kings of Arcadia. This assumption was ridiculed by the people, but the senate had the meanness to confirm it by an authentic enactment. In their hopes and in their fears, the great of this world are the most grovelling of all men.

(1) Cesarea was the seat of government, and was, therefore, considered the capital of Judea, as a Roman province.

(2) He not only said it, but proved it. St. Luke only mentions here the heads of his discourse; but he enlarged on each of these points, and treated them so forcibly, that Festus, convinced of his innocence, was disposed to liberate him, had it not been that he feared to disoblige the Jews. This is what we learn from St. Paul himself (chap. xxviii. 18).

nor against the temple, nor against Cæsar (1) have I offended in any thing. But Festus, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, answering Paul, said: Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Then Paul said: I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat where I ought to be judged: to the Jews I have done no injury, as thou very well knowest. For if I have injured them, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die. But if there be none of these things whereof they accuse me, no man may deliver me to them: I appeal to Cæsar (2). Then Festus, having conferred with the council, answered: Hast thou appealed to Cæsar? To Cæsar shalt thou go."

Thus it was that he got rid of his embarrassment, and escaped the unpleasant alternative of condemning or acquitting; but he knew not that, by this act, he prepared the way for the fulfilment of the promise made by the Lord, that the "vessel of election" who had already confessed his name before Jews and Gentiles should also confess it before kings. "After some days king Agrippa (3) and Bernice came down to Cesarea to salute Festus. And as they tarried there many days, Festus told the king of Paul, saying: A certain man was left prisoner by Felix; about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the ancients of the Jews came unto me, desiring condemnation against him. To whom I answered: It is not the custom of the Romans to condemn any man before that he who is accused have his accusers present, and have liberty to make his answer, to clear himself of the things laid to his charge.

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(1) Since he defended himself on this point, it follows that he must have been accused in that way. We know what were the sentiments of the Jews with regard to the Roman government, and we also know from the writings of St. Paul how submissive he was to all authority. Nevertheless, it was these same Jews who dared to accuse St. Paul of rebellion against Cæsar. Passion deprives men of all shame.

(2) Every Roman citizen, when tried in the provinces, had the privilege of appealing to the emperor in person; he was then conveyed to Rome under a safe guard.

(3) Agrippa the younger, son of Herod Agrippa, and brother of Drusilla already mentioned, and of Bernice, by whom he is here accompanied, with whom he is suspected of having had an incestuous intercourse. Bernice was at that time the widow of her uncle Herod, king of Chalcedon; she subsequently married Polemon, king of Cilicia, whom she soon left; she finally gained the affections of the emperor Titus, who would have espoused her, were it not for the murmurs of the Roman people.

When therefore they were come hither, without any delay, on the day following, sitting in the judgment-seat, I commanded the man to be brought. Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation of things which I thought ill of: but had certain questions of their own superstition (1) against him, and of one JESUS deceased (2), whom Paul affirmed to be alive. I, therefore, being in a doubt of this manner of question, asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things. But Paul appealing to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar (3). And Agrippa said to Festus: I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him."

"And on the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice were come with great pomp, and had entered into the hall of audience with the tribunes and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment, Paul was brought forth. And Festus said: King Agrippa, and all ye men who are here present with us, you see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews dealt with me at Jerusalem, requesting" me against him "and crying out that he ought not to live any longer. Yet have I found nothing that he hath committed worthy of death. But forasmuch as he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have nothing certain to write to my lord (4). For which cause I have brought

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(1) Was it not very disrespectful towards king Agrippa to apply the name of a superstition to the religion which that prince professed? or rather did not Festus show by that contemptuous epithet how little the Roman governors thought of these petty sovereigns whom the emperors made and unmade, as a merchant engages or dismisses his clerks.

(2) He considered Paul innocent, because the chief charge brought against him appeared to him of little or no consequence. In that he was mistaken, for the thing was all important, and had it not been true that Jesus had risen from the dead, Paul would have deserved to die as a public disturber, and an open aggressor against a religion which had God for its author; but a pagan could not understand this.

(3) It is well known that the Roman emperors had appropriated to themselves the names of Cæsar and of Augustus. The Cæsar here referred to was Nero, but Nero yet in the commencement of his reign, before he had begun to persecute the Christians, as he did a few years after; God having apparently decreed, for the honor of his religion, that its first great persecutor should be the most execrable of princes.

(4) In Latin, *domino*, to the lord. The word *dominus* was the title given to the em-

him forth before you, and especially before thee, O king Agrippa, that examination being made, I may have what to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not to signify the things laid to his charge"

CHAPTER XXVI.

ST. PAUL'S ADDRESS TO KING AGRIPPA.

(*a*) "THEN Agrippa said to Paul: Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul, stretching forth his hand, began" thus "to make his answer. I think myself happy, O king Agrippa (1), that I am to answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews; especially as thou knowest all, both customs and questions that are" discussed "among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. And my life, indeed, from my youth, which was from the beginning among my own nation in Jerusalem, all the Jews do know: having known me from the beginning (if they will give testimony), that according to the most sure sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now for the hope of the promise (2) that was made by God to the fa-

(*a*) Acts, xxvi. 1.

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perors in speaking or writing to them, as we see by the letters of Pliny to Trajan. When it was first given to Augustus he modestly refused it, so great was the dignity expressed by it. It has now become so common that it has no longer the same signification.

(1) The appeal having been made, St. Paul was not here before judges. Agrippa made him speak for the pleasure of hearing him, and Festus, with the hope of obtaining some further information to transmit to the emperor. Hence it is not surprising that St. Paul does not address himself to Festus, as he should have done had the latter been still his judge. Nevertheless, it must have been with his consent that Agrippa was thus addressed, in a place where the governor alone had authority. It would seem that he chose to leave the honor of this conference to the king.

(2) The promise of a Messiah and of a Christ, who was to be the liberator and the Saviour of his people.

thers, do I stand subject to judgment: unto which our twelve tribes, serving night and day, hope to come. For which hope, O king, I am accused by the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible (1), that God should raise the dead?"

"And I indeed did formerly think that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of JESUS of Nazareth. Which also I did at Jerusalem, and many of the saints did I shut up in prisons, having received authority of the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I brought the sentence. And oftentimes punishing them in every synagogue, I compelled them to blaspheme (2): and being yet more mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities."

"Whereupon when I was going to Damascus with authority and permission of the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that were in company with me. And when we were all fallen down on the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me in the Hebrew tongue (3): Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And I said: Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord answered: I am JESUS, whom thou persecutest. But rise up and stand upon thy feet; for to this end have I appeared to thee (4), that I may make thee a minister and a wit-

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(1) Some have thought that this could only be addressed to those of the audience who denied the resurrection of the dead, and not to the Pharisees, who believed in it. St. Paul might, however, have addressed himself to both. To the former, he signified: You contradict yourselves, if, believing in an Omnipotent God, you yet do not acknowledge that he can raise the dead; to the latter the question meant: It is very inconsistent for you to deny, without examination, the particular resurrection of Jesus Christ, if you believe in the general resurrection of all mankind. According to your principles, instead of rejecting the fact as impossible, you ought to investigate its proofs before you decide that it is false and unfounded.

(2) That is to say, that he had the misfortune to make martyrs and apostates. St. Paul does not by any means spare himself in relating his past misdeeds; he finds in them his own shame and confusion, and he desires to humble himself by their recital: he sees them redound to the glory of his Master by the additional weight which they give to his testimony, and he wishes to glorify Him. To humble themselves, and by that means to glorify God, these two, when united, form the chief delight of the saints.

(3) From this we learn that St. Paul was here speaking in another language, which could only be Latin or Greek.

(4) In St. Paul's address to the Jews (chap. xxii.), he says that it was Ananias who announced to him the mission for which he was destined; here it is the Lord himself

ness of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things wherein I will" yet "appear to thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the nations unto which I now send thee, to open their eyes, that they may be converted from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and a lot among the saints by the faith that is in me."

"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not incredulous (1) to the heavenly vision: but to them first that are at Damascus (2) and at Jerusalem, and unto all the country of Judea, and to the Gentiles did I preach, that they should do penance, and turn to God, doing works worthy of penance. For this cause the Jews, when I was in the temple, having apprehended me, went about to kill me. But being aided by the help of God, I stand unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other thing than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come to pass," namely, "That Christ should suffer (3), and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light to the people" of Israel "and to the Gentiles."

The Gospel, which was a scandal to the Jews, was to be a folly to the incredulous Gentiles. "As he spoke these things, and made his answer, Festus," whose feeble mind could not attain to these sublime

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who declares it; both accounts are true. Jesus Christ had revealed it to one and to the other, to the end that each might confirm it to the other. Two men may dream at the same time; but if they see simultaneously the same thing, and a thing as far distant from their thoughts as this was, then it is no longer a dream, it is a revelation.

(1) The Greek word expresses something more than non-incredulity; it signifies not only that the apostle believed what was revealed to him, but also that he did as he was commanded to do, as the sequel testifies.

(2) We have before observed that St. Paul made two sojourns in Damascus, and that he passed all the intermediate time in Arabia, being, at least, two years. It has been conjectured that during all this time he refrained from preaching, and applied himself entirely to the exercises of a solitary life. The passage here under consideration seems to confirm this supposition, since the apostle makes no allusion to Arabia when enumerating the places wherein he had commenced to preach the Gospel. It is rather a significant fact in the life of St. Paul that he prepared himself by retreat for the duties of the mission.

(3) *That Christ should suffer.* This had to be proved to the Jews in order to dispel their prejudices. But then the proof is so clearly manifested by all the prophets, that the most obstinate prejudice cannot hold out against it.

truths, Festus "said with a loud voice: Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. And Paul said: I am not mad, most excellent Festus, but I speak words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, to whom also I speak with confidence. For I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him. For neither was any of these things done in a corner." Then turning again to king Agrippa, he said: "Believest thou the prophets, O king Agrippa?" Yes, "I know that thou believest."

He did indeed believe, since St. Paul affirms it so positively. It only remained, then, to hear that testimony of Moses and the prophets, the application of which to Jesus Christ is so clear and so manifest. The inference would have been, that he must believe in him. Grace had conducted the king thus far, he being already a Jew by profession, and with conviction. The unhappy prince, however, who foresaw and feared this result, warded it off, and by one of those answers which signify nothing, if it be not a resolution to hear no more. "In a little (1)," said he, "thou persuadest me to become a Christian. And Paul said: I would to God, that both in a little and in much, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, should become such as I also am, except these bands (2)."

This expression, of the purest and most ardent zeal, terminated the conference. "The king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them. And when they were gone aside, they spoke among themselves, saying: This man hath done nothing worthy of death or of bands. And Agrippa said to Festus: This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar."

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(1) Others translate: *You have almost persuaded me to become a Christian.* From the way in which St. Paul frames his answer (*In modico vel in magno*), we think it better to follow the interpretation here given.

(2) Why except his bands, since he regarded it as so great an honor to bear them for Christ's sake? We have the question solved by Jesus Christ himself: *All men take not this word* (Matt., xix.). And it was not fitting to expose this pearl to the insults of these unclean animals.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ST. PAUL IS SHIPPED FOR ROME.—HE ENCOUNTERS A VIOLENT STORM.—THE VESSEL IS LOST, BUT ALL ON BOARD ARE SAVED, CONFORMABLY TO THE REVELATION MADE TO PAUL BY AN ANGEL.

(*a*) "AND when it was determined that he should sail into Italy, and that Paul with the other prisoners should be delivered to a centurion, named Julius, of the band Augusta, going on board a ship of Adrumetum (1), we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia, Aristarchus (2), the Macedonian of Thessalonica, continuing with us. And the day following we came to Sidon. And Julius, treating Paul courteously, permitted him to go to his friends, and to take care of himself. And when we had launched from thence we sailed under Cyprus; because the winds were contrary. And sailing over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphilia, we came to Lystra, which is in Lycia (3): and there the centurion finding a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy, removed us into it. And when for many days we had sailed slowly, and were scarce come over against Gnidus (4), the wind not suffering us, we sailed near Crete (5) by Salmone; and with much ado sailing by it, we came into a certain place which is

(*a*) Acts, xxvii. 1.

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(1) Adrumetum was a port of Africa. We read in the Greek, *Adrumythe*, which was a maritime town of Mysia, in Asia Minor. We have adhered to the Vulgate.

(2) He had followed St. Paul to Ephesus, then accompanied him in his voyage to Greece and to Macedonia; he then came with him to Jerusalem, thence to Cesarea, and finally to Rome, where he was his companion in imprisonment. He only left him when, in obedience to his own orders, he returned to Thessalonica, his native city, of which the apostle had ordained him bishop. He died there some years after, full of virtue and of good works. He is commemorated in the *Roman Martyrology* on the 4th of August.

(3) This addition, *which is in Lycia*, may have been put in to distinguish this Lystra from another city of the same name which has been mentioned in chap. xiv. The latter is in Lycaonia, and is not a seaport. Ancient geographers make no mention of Lystra in Lycia. In the common Greek text there is *Myra* instead of *Lystra*.

(4) *Gnidus*, a city built on the promontory of Asia Minor; it is now called *Stadia*.

(5) The island of Crete, now Candia. Cape Solomon, which is the eastern extremity of that island, has retained its ancient name. Of the other places here mentioned there is not a trace remaining.

called Good-havens, nigh to which was the city of Thalassa. And when much time was spent, and when sailing now was dangerous, because the fast (1) was now past, Paul comforted" and at the same time advised "them, saying to them: Ye men, I see that the voyage beginneth to be with injury and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives."

That plainly signified that it was better to remain where they were until a more favorable season. "But the centurion believed the pilot and the master of the ship (2) more than those things which were said by Paul. And whereas it was not a commodious haven to winter in, the greater part gave counsel to sail thence, if by any means they might reach Phenice to winter there, which is a haven of Crete, looking towards the southwest and northwest. And the south wind gently blowing, thinking that they had obtained their purpose, when they had loosed from Asson, they sailed close by Crete."

"But," and this is the beginning of the storm, "not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euro-aquilo (3). And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up against the

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(1) This fast was that of the feast of expiation, which occurred about the autumnal equinox. To say that this fast was over, signified that the season had now set in when navigation became dangerous.

(2) So long as he did not regard St. Paul as an inspired man, he was quite right to be advised rather by the pilot and shipmaster; but he very soon found out that the knowledge which comes from heaven is far more certain than that which is merely the result of reason and experience.

(3) The Greek calls it *Euroclydon*, which signifies a stormy east wind, without determining whether it was northeast or southeast; but the author of the Vulgate, who lived at that time, could not but know what wind it was that the Greeks called *euroclydon*, and since he has termed it northeast, it must really have been so. Thus, suppose it were hereafter doubted what wind it is that the Italians call *sirocco*, if it were found that a writer of our time had translated it by *southwest wind*, that authority would be regarded as decisive, because it is taken for granted that an author will not be ignorant of a thing so well known. This observation, though apparently of little consequence, gives considerable weight to the common opinion, which is that the vessel anchored at the island of Malta, and not at that of Meleda, which is in the Gulf of Venice. A glance at the map will suffice to show that it was impossible for a vessel driven on by a northeast wind so violent that they were obliged to leave the ship to its control—that it was impossible for such a vessel to make her way from the coast of Crete into the Gulf of Venice.

wind, giving up the ship to the winds, we were driven. And running under a certain island that is called Cauda (1), we had much work to come by the boat. Which being taken up, they used helps (2), under-girding the ship (3), and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, they let down the sail-yard (4), and so were driven. And we being mightily tossed with the tempest, the next day they lightened the ship; and the third day they cast out with their own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm lay on us, all hope of our being saved was now taken away."

All must, indeed, have perished, had not Heaven heard the prayer of a powerful intercessor, and granted to one the safety of all. "And after they had fasted a long time, Paul standing forth in the midst of them, said: You should indeed, O ye men, have hearkened unto me (5), and not have loosed from Crete, and have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer. For there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but only of the ship. For an angel of God, whose I am (6), and whom I serve, stood by

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(1) There is to the south of Crete a small island named Goza, which is believed to be that here mentioned.

(2) The Latin and Greek say, *they used helps*, which leaves it uncertain whether it is meant that they employed in this manœuvre all that were in the vessel, or that they compelled all on board to lend a hand, passengers as well as sailors, as is usual in great tempests.

(3) The under-girding of the ship could not prevent her from running on the quicksands, but in case that misfortune did happen, they could prevent her from falling asunder.

(4) There is in the text *submisso vase*, and in this the Latin and Greek agree. Most of the commentators translate *vase* by *the mainmast* (*le grand mât*). Some understand it of the sails, and we have followed them. The word *vase* is by no means applicable to a mast, but it is to a sail, which, when it is inflated by the wind, appears to contain one in its concavity. What supports this interpretation is, that the great sheet shown to St. Peter in his mysterious vision is thrice mentioned as a *vessel*.

(5) It is not through vexation, and still less through vanity, that he reminds them of his advice, which they had rejected; it is merely to induce them to put faith in the prediction which he is about to make. It is as if he said to them: You can no longer doubt that my word is worthy of belief, since I foretold what has happened to you; believe me now then when I announce to you that you are now to be saved.

(6) He was speaking to idolaters, who had to be informed that the God to whom he belonged, and whom he served, was different from theirs; and that since his God was the only one who could save them, they should no longer acknowledge any other.

me this night, saying: Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Cæsar; and behold God hath given thee all them that sail with thee (1). Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall so be, as it hath been told me. And," he added, "we must come unto a certain island." He did not mention the name of the island, apparently because the angel had not made it known to him.

"But after the fourteenth night was come, as we were sailing in Adria (2), about midnight the ship-men deemed that they discovered some country. Who also sounding, found twenty fathoms; and going on a little further, they found fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should fall upon rough places, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. But as the ship-men sought to fly out of the ship, having let down the boat into the sea, under color as though they would have cast anchors out of the fore part of the ship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers: Except these stay in the ship you cannot be saved (3)." They believed him at last, and, "then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off."

"And when it began to be light, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying: This day is the fourteenth day that you expect and remain fasting (4), taking nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take

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(1) He had, therefore, asked it, since the angel declares that God had granted it to him. Hence he had done more by praying than the others by their labor, as the hands of Moses raised to heaven contributed more to gain the victory than the armed hands which dealt the blows.

Those who, in their state, have no other occupation than prayer, if they pray with fervor and devotion, are more useful to their country than those who serve her with arm and head.

(2) This makes a difficulty against the descent into the island of Malta. It follows from this that it is only the Gulf of Venice which got the name of the Adriatic sea; but we learn from Strabo, a cotemporary of St. Paul, that this name had then a more enlarged signification, and that it contained besides the Gulf of Venice, the Ionian sea and the sea of Sicily, in which the island of Malta is situated.

(3) The accomplishment of the divine promise depended on the sailors remaining in the ship; not absolutely so, but because God, who had resolved to save them all, had resolved to save them by natural and human means, wherefore the experience of the sailors would be mainly useful.

(4) That is to say, that they had scarcely taken any thing, as it happens during storms, when, independent of the fright which destroys the appetite, the stomach becomes so

some nourishment for your health's sake (1); for there shall not a hair of the head of any of you perish. And when he had said these things, taking bread, he gave thanks to God in the sight of them all (2): and when he had broken it, he began to eat. Then they were all of better cheer, and they also took some meat. And we were in all in the ship, two hundred three score and sixteen souls, and when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, casting the wheat into the sea. And when it was day, they knew not the land; but they discovered a certain creek that had a shore, into which they minded, if they could, to thrust in the ship. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves to the sea, loosing withal the rudder-bands (3); and hoisting up the main-sail to the wind, they made towards shore."

This was the moment when all the predictions of the holy apostle were to be both tested and fulfilled. "And when we were fallen into a place where two seas met," the tongue of land by which they were separated being covered by the water was not seen by them, so that "they run the ship aground: and the fore-part indeed, sticking fast, remained unmovable; but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the sea. And the soldiers' counsel was that they should kill the prisoners, lest any of them, swimming out, should escape," and that they might have to answer for them with their own lives; "but the centurion, willing to save Paul, forbade it to be done; and he commanded that they who could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and save themselves and get to land. And the rest, some they carried on boards, and some on those things

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disordered by the violent rocking of the vessel, that even those most accustomed to the sea cannot eat.

(1) The apostle adds that they must eat in order to save their lives, *pro salute vestra*, because being exhausted with fatigue and long fasting, they would have been wholly unable to save themselves in a shipwreck like that which they were soon to encounter. God, as we have just said, would only save them by natural means; and to look for any other means would have been no better than tempting him.

(2) Christians are often deterred by a false shame from doing before other Christians that which St. Paul did before idolaters. Is it then disgraceful to believe that it is God alone who gives us our nourishment? and if we believe it, is it a weakness to testify our gratitude to him?

(3) The ancients had two rudder-bands at the stern, one on either side.

that belonged to the ship. And so it came to pass that every soul got safe to land." Thus the destruction of the vessel was completed, and every living soul on board saved, so that the prophecy was in both instances verified.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ARRIVAL AT MALTA AND SOJOURN THERE.—ST. PAUL MIRACULOUSLY CURES ALL THE SICK.—HE DEPARTS FROM MALTA AND ARRIVES AT ROME.—HE ASSEMBLES THE CHIEFS OF THE JEWS.—HE ADDRESSES THEM, BUT FOR THE MOST PART WITH LITTLE SUCCESS.—HE ANNOUNCES THE GOSPEL TO ALL THOSE WHO COME TO VISIT HIM.

(*a*) "AND when we had escaped, then we knew that the island was called Melita. But the barbarians (1) showed us no small courtesy. For, kindling a fire, they refreshed us all, because of the present rain and of the cold. And when Paul had gathered together a bundle of sticks, and had laid them on the fire, a viper (2) coming out of the heat, fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the beast hanging on his hand, they said one to another: Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, who though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance (3) doth not suffer him to live. And he, indeed,

(*a*) Acts, xxviii. 1.

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(1) The word *barbarian*, in its primitive signification, simply means a *stranger*. The Greeks and Romans applied it to those nations who spoke a language different from theirs; these were apparently Africans who had established themselves in the island of Malta, which lies contiguous to the coast of Africa.

(2) There are still serpents in the island of Malta, but they are free from venom: children are often seen to handle them and even put them in their bosom, without receiving any injury. If it be thought that St. Paul did not land at Malta, the consequence must be that this exemption from venom is peculiar to the serpents of that island; but if St. Paul was really there, then the miracle is incontestable; for, seeing that the people expected to see him fall down dead when he was bitten by the viper, it follows that before his arrival the serpents there had been venomous.

(3) The idea of an avenging justice is common to all mankind. The impious may choose to scoff at it, but they cannot help fearing it, in the depth of their own hearts.

shaking off the beast into the fire, suffered no harm. But they supposed that he would begin to swell up, and that he would suddenly fall down and die. But expecting long, and seeing that there came no harm to him, changing their minds they said that he was a god (1)."

"Now in these places were possessions of the chief man of the island, named Publius (2), who receiving us, for three days entertained us courteously. And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux. To whom Paul entered in, and when he had prayed, and laid his hands on him, he healed him. Which being done, all that had diseases in the island came, and were healed. Who also honored us with many honors, and when we were to set sail, they laded us with such things as were necessary" for the voyage (3).

"And after three months we sailed in a ship of Alexandria, that had wintered in the island, whose sign was the Castors (4). And when we were come to Syracuse (5), we tarried there three days.

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(1) The people know no medium, and it is truly surprising to see how rapidly they pass from one extreme to the other. In Lystra they had at first taken St. Paul for a god, and the next day they stoned him. These Maltese regarded him at first as a murderer, and a few minutes after they believed him to be a god.

(2) Publius is a Roman name. The Greek says of him that he was the *chief man*, and the Latin that he was *prince* of the island. It is generally understood that he was the governor, or chief magistrate, under the authority of the prætor of Sicily, of which island Malta was a dependency.

(3) Nothing is said of the fruit produced by St. Paul's preaching in the island of Malta. The tradition of the country is, that the inhabitants were all converted. This is very probable, considering the zeal of the holy apostle, and the blessing attached to his mission, especially amongst the Gentiles, as these people were, together with the great number of miracles performed by him in the island, the honors paid him by the islanders, and on his account to all those who accompanied him.

(4) *Castor and Pollux*, two of the heathen deities, who were believed to have a care over mariners; their images were either painted or carved on the prow or stern of the ship, which usually took its name from them.

(5) It is a very short sail from Malta to Syracuse; but from the other *Melita*, now called *Meleda*, the voyage is long and circuitous. It would be rather strange if such a voyage could be made without either storm or calm, or any other incident worthy of St. Luke's notice; considering that he has given the most minute particulars of all these occurrences, mentioning not only the places where they landed, but even those that came in view. This is another presumption in favor of the island of Malta.

From thence, compassing by the shore, we came to Rhegium (1); and after one day, the south wind blowing, we came the second day to Puteoli (2). Where finding brethren (3), we were desired to tarry with them seven days; and so we went to Rome. And from thence, when the brethren had heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns (4), whom when Paul saw, he gave thanks to God, and took courage. And when we were come to Rome, Paul was suffered (5) to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him. And after the third day" from his arrival, that indefatigable minister still burning with zeal for the salvation of his brethren, notwithstanding all the persecution that he underwent, "called together the chiefs of the Jews. And when they were assembled, he said to them: Men, brethren, I having done nothing against the people, or the custom of our fathers, was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who, when they had examined me, would have released me, for that there was no cause of death in me. But the Jews contradicting it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar, not that I had any thing to accuse my nation of. For this cause, therefore, I desired to see you and to speak to you, because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. But they said to him: We neither received letters con-

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(1) A town of Calabria, on the soil of Messina. Syracuse and Rhegium have preserved, by tradition, the remembrance of the miracles and conversions wrought there by St. Paul on his passage.

(2) A maritime town of the land of Labour, three leagues from Naples. It was at Puteoli that they disembarked, and the rest of the journey to Rome was made by land.

(3) Those who are here called *brethren* are Christians, who were already very numerous in Rome and throughout Italy. Some years before this, St. Paul wrote to the Romans, whom he had not yet seen, that their faith was famous all over the world; St. Peter it was who had planted it there. St. Paul, who did not visit Rome for several years after him, watered that blessed plant, and contributed much to its increase.

(4) Two small towns, which are now only known as having been on the way to Rome.

(5) This good treatment might have had two causes: one is the letter of Festus, who, in giving an account of the prisoner, doubtless declared that he found him guilty of no crime; the other might be the report of the centurion Julius, who, having become his admirer, and apparently his convert, must have spoken of him according to the high opinion he had conceived of him. Thus was accomplished the design of God, that St. Paul, though captive and in chains, should still have sufficient liberty to labor, as he did, for the propagation of the faith.

cerning thee from Judea, neither did any of the brethren that came hither relate or speak any evil of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that it is gainsaid everywhere."

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came very many to him unto his lodgings; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning JESUS, out of the law of Moses and the prophets," the whole day, "from morning until evening. And some believed the things that were said; but some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, Paul speaking this one word: Well did the Holy Ghost speak to our fathers by Isaias the prophet, saying: *Go to this people, and say to them: With the ear you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is grown gross, and with their ears have they heard heavily, and their eyes they have shut: lest perhaps they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them* (1). Be it known, therefore, to you that" the word of "this salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it. And when he had said these things the Jews went out from him, having much reasoning among themselves. And he remained two whole years in his own hired lodging: and he received all that came in to him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things which concern the Lord JESUS CHRIST with all confidence, without prohibition."

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(1) The small number of those who believed might be shaken by the incredulity of the majority. St. Paul strengthened them against this temptation by showing that the incredulity of the latter had been foretold. There can be no doubt that this is the reason why this prophecy of Isaias, announcing so unequivocally the incredulity of the bulk of the Jewish nation, is six times recorded in the New Testament.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONTAINING THOSE PASSAGES FROM THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL WHEREIN HE MAKES MENTION OF WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM DURING THE TWO YEARS OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

His lodging had been assigned to him for a prison; but that prison was speedily converted into a public school of Christianity, because of the great number of people who thronged in to see and hear a man so celebrated. (*a*) "For which," says he himself, "I am an ambassador in a chain, so that therein I may be bold to speak according as I ought." Some appeared to fear that his captivity might be an obstacle to the progress of religion: the contrary was the case. (*b*) "Now, brethren," wrote he to the Philippians, "I desire you should know that the things which have happened to me have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel: so that my bonds are made manifest, in Christ, in all the court, and in all other places." Conversions failed not to follow, and they multiplied so fast, that a domestic church was speedily formed even in the most dissolute of all courts. When he salutes the Philippians on the part of the saints who were in Rome, he does it principally in the name of them "that are of Cæsar's household (1)."

His success soon gained him fellow-laborers. Some became so through genuine zeal: others through a secret jealousy which they concealed beneath a show of zeal: this also St. Paul makes known to us. (*c*) "Many of the brethren in the Lord, growing confident by my bands, are much more bold to speak the word of God without fear. Some, indeed, even out of envy and contention; but some also for good-will preach Christ: some out of charity, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel: and some out of contention

(*a*) Ephes., vi. 20. (*b*) Phil., i. 12. (*c*) Phil., i. 14.

(1) Philip., iv. 22. Salutant vos omnes sancti, maxime autem qui de Cæsaris domo sunt.

preach Christ not sincerely, supposing that they raise affliction to my bands. But what then?" adds this magnanimous man, who was as far elevated above human infirmity as heaven is above earth, "What then? so that by all means, whether by occasion, or by truth, Christ be preached: in this also I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

Thus it was that, with the merit of his own works, he also acquired the merit of what others did, whatsoever might be their intentions. Meanwhile his zeal was not confined to Rome or to Italy. Paul was in bondage, but, to use his own expression, the word of God was not bound (1). Enchained as he was, he sent it flying to the most distant countries; and from the darkness of his obscure den, he enlightened all nations and all ages. It was during his captivity in Rome that he wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, that to the Laodiceans, which has not come down to us, the second to Timothy, that to Philemon, and the sublime Epistle to the Hebrews, wherein he demonstrates with so much depth and so much magnificence the infinite superiority given to the new law by the divinity of its founder, and the excellence of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, who, at the same time that he is the eternal priest, is also the sole and eternal victim.

If St. Paul received consolation and assistance from his brethren, they were also the cause of many trials to him. Many of them fell away from him; some through weariness, and others through fickleness. Besides the envious of whom we have spoken, he had some avowed persecutors: such was Alexander the coppersmith, who did him, he says, "much evil (2)." The apostle had delivered him up to Satan, together with Hymeneus, because they taught evil doctrines (*a*). It is held that through revenge he exerted himself against St. Paul, and left no means untried that might bring about his condemnation in the impending trial. But the greatest trial of all was to see himself abandoned by his friends in the time of need.

(*a*) 1 Tim., i. 20.

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(1) 2 Tim., ii. 9. Verbum Dei non est alligatum.

(2) 2 Tim., iv. 14. Alexander ærarius multa mala mihi ostendit.

Not one of them would venture to go with him when he had to make his first appearance in court. He begged of God that he would forgive them for this desertion, but as for himself, he was no ways disconcerted. Though deserted by men, (*a*) "the Lord," said he, "stood by me and strengthened me, that by me the preaching may be accomplished, and that all the Gentiles may hear; and," he adds, "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." By this expression, which is drawn from Holy Writ, he meant the Emperor Nero, whose cruelty soon exceeded that of the most ferocious lion. In the end, St. Paul became the victim of that monstrous cruelty; but that occurred nine years later, when on the same day, and for the same cause, he and the chief of the apostles sealed with their blood the glorious testimony which they had rendered to the Lord JESUS, to whom be honor, glory, and power for ever and ever. Amen.

(*a*) 2 Tim., iv. 16.

END OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

LIFE OF ST. PETER.

CHAPTER I.

ST. ANDREW AND ST. PETER. — ST. PETER THE CHIEF OF THE APOSTLES. — GREAT DRAUGHT OF FISHES. — THE APOSTLES RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST. — ANANIAS AND SAPHIRA.

St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, and first vicar of Christ on earth, was the son of Jonas, or John, of the tribe of Nephtali, and was born in Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, seventy-five miles distant from Jerusalem, situated on the Sea of Tiberias. His original name was Simon. Some authors have fixed the date of his birth three years before that of the Blessed Virgin, and seventeen years before the birth of Christ. He was the brother of St. Andrew, and according to Epiphanius was older than he. Before his apostleship he was married, and dwelt with his wife and relations in Capharnaum, pursuing the trade of a fisherman, and by this means endeavoring to support his family. His wife was the daughter of Aristobulus, the brother of Barnabas, and she is said by Clement Alexandrinus to have obtained the crown of martyrdom. He was brought to our Lord by St. Andrew, who tells him he had found the Messias, and brings him to him who is the Christ. When our Lord beholds him, he says: "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter."

That the Cephas who was reprehended by St. Paul for the inconsistency of his conduct with respect to the Mosaic rites, was not St. Peter, is the opinion of the best writers. Eusebius quotes Clem-

ent Alexandrinus as maintaining that this Cephas was one of the seventy disciples. This opinion is followed by the most learned writers of antiquity, by St. Jerome, by St. Gregory the Great, by St. Anselm, and by many others.

Some have supposed that St. Andrew and St. Peter were amongst the disciples of St. John the Baptist, and were anxiously looking for the expectation of the promised Messias. St. Andrew having heard St. John the Baptist call our Lord "the Lamb of God; behold, he who taketh away the sin of the world,"(*a*) was convinced of his being the Messias, and hastens to impart the intelligence to St. Peter He was equally anxious with his brother to see the promised Messias, him of whom the law and the prophets had written so much, so that when he beholds him he believes in him, and stays with him during the remainder of the day. After this the two brothers leave our Lord, and return to their ordinary occupation as fishermen.

About the end of this year, the first of our Lord's ministrations, it would appear that the Saviour of the world saw St. Peter and St. Andrew washing their nets on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias; he enters into the ship which belonged to St. Peter, and desires him "to thrust out a little from the land, and sitting down, he taught the multitude out of the ship, and when he had ceased to speak, he said to Simon: Launch out now into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught, and Simon answering said to him: Master, we have labored all the night and have taken nothing; but at thy word I will let down the net; and when they had done this they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes, and their net was breaking, and they beckoned to their partners who were in the other ship that they should come and help them, and they came, and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking, which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus' knees saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." This humility of St. Peter procures for them greater graces, for "when they had brought their ships to land, leaving all things, they follow him." And for this promptness in forsaking the things of the world, to become the dis-

(*a*) St. John, i. 29.

ciples of Christ, St. Peter is told, when he asks our Lord what they shall have who have left all things and followed him: "Amen, I say to you, that you who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall possess life everlasting." (*a*)

Our Lord is said to have baptized St. Peter and his apostles; the seventy disciples are said to have been baptized by St. Peter and St. John.

Several of the fathers assert that after his apostleship St. Peter separated from his wife, and lived in a state of continency for the remainder of his days. St. John Chrysostom, speaking of him, calls him an illustrious model of chastity. (*b*)

From this period St. Peter and St. Andrew closely unite themselves to our Lord, and do not leave him during the entire period of his ministrations. Going from thence they proceed to Capharnaum, and, accompanied by St. James and St. John, they enter their own house. There, too, our Lord enters, and heals Simon's wife's mother, who is sick of a fever: "They tell him of her, and he came and lifted her up, taking her by the hand, and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto him." (*c*)

Our Lord generally addressed his conversation to St. Peter, who usually answered on behalf of all the apostles. Our Lord had hitherto distinguished him from the other apostles by the tokens of dignity and honor which he had shown him. About a year before the events connected with his passion took place, our Lord resolves to entrust to his keeping the Church which he was to found on earth. After having received testimony of his faith and of his charity, and of his zeal for the salvation of souls, our Lord says to him: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt

(*a*) St. Matt. ix. 27-29. (*b*) De Virgin, c. 82. (*c*) St. Mark, i. 31.

loose upon earth it shall be loosed also in heaven." (*a*) St. Peter is often represented with one key in his hand, as a symbol of the one holy Catholic and apostolic Church, and as an evidence of the primacy of this being granted to him, that thus there might be one fold and one pastor. By the three keys with which St. Peter is often represented as holding in his hand, it is shown that authority in heaven, in hell, and on earth, is granted to him.

On another occasion our Lord declares the infallibility of St. Peter, and his office of confirming his brethren in the faith; for at the Last Supper he addresses him thus: "And thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren;" (*b*) or, as the most celebrated commentators seem inclined to render the passage, giving its proper force to the adverb, "thou in thy turn confirm thy brethren." By the tribute which our Lord paid for himself and St. Peter, he desired to confirm the supremacy which he and his successors were to exercise over the Church. To St. Peter our Lord had consigned the mystical keys of the kingdom of heaven; and by this he and the Roman pontiffs were constituted his vicars on earth. In the transfiguration our Lord made him also partaker of his glory, with two other apostles, St. James and St. John.

On two separate occasions St. Peter shows his zeal and love for our Lord by casting himself into the sea, and not waiting until the ship would arrive at land. When St. Peter heard our Lord predict his death and sufferings in Jerusalem, he expresses in the strongest language his attachment and devotion to him, and tells him he is ready to go with him to prison and to death.

Before the Last Supper our Lord, having loved his apostles, loved them to the end; and he rises from the table, and takes a towel to gird himself with it, having first laid aside his garments; he then pours water into a basin, and begins to wash the feet of his disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. "He cometh therefore to Simon Peter, and Peter saith to him: Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said to him: What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter said to him: Thou shalt never wash my feet." He only permits his

(*a*) St. Matt. xvi. 18, 19. (*b*) St. Luke, xxii. 32.

Lord to do so, when he tells him that "If I washed thee not, thou shalt have no part with me." (*a*)

He then has the privilege of following him to the Garden of Gethsemane, where, with St. James and St. John he is a witness of our Lord's being carried away as a prisoner, by Judas and by the crowd who accompanied him. St. Peter accompanied our Lord, and his heart is filled with zeal, when he beholds him thus taken prisoner; and he stretches forth his hand and draws out his sword, and strikes the servant of the high-priest, and cuts off his ear. Our Lord turns round to St. Peter, and having healed the wound which he had inflicted on the servant, whose name was Malchus, he addressed him in the following words: "Put up thy sword again into its place, for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (*b*) When our Lord was brought before his judges, St. Peter accompanies him, and enters with him into the house of Caiaphas, where two of the servant-maids say to him, that he was with Jesus of Galilee; this St. Peter denies before them all, saying: "I know not what thou sayest;" the second time he denies with an oath, saying: "I know not the man." And after a little while, those that stood by say to St. Peter: "Surely thou also art one of them, for even thy speech doth discover thee." Then he begins to curse and to swear, that he knew not the man; "and immediately the cock crew; and Peter remembered the words of Jesus which he had said, Before the cock crow thou wilt deny me thrice; and going forth, he wept bitterly." (*c*) So deep was the contrition of St. Peter for his denying his Lord, and so bitter were the tears which he shed, that they are said to have formed two furrows in his cheeks, which remained there during his life-time; and the life which he led from that time forward was of so mortified a nature, that he usually ate nothing but herbs or roots.

After his resurrection our Lord appears to St. Mary Magdalen, and bids her to go and tell his apostles and St. Peter, that he went before them into Galilee. Thus, by especially mentioning his name, he desires to show them that he has accepted the penance which he had performed for denying him.

After this our Lord shows himself again to the disciples at the

(*a*) St. John, xiii. 8. (*b*) Matt. xxvi. 52. (*c*) Matt. xxvii. 73–75.

Sea of Tiberias. Simon Peter and other disciples having gone a fishing, during the night they caught nothing; when the morning came they beheld Jesus standing on the shore, and they knew him not. In reply to our Lord they tell him they have not any meat, and he bids them cast their nets on the right side of the ship and they should find. In obedience to our Lord's directions, they cast on the side of the ship he directed them, and they are not able to draw for the multitude of fishes. The disciple whom the Lord loved, St. John, says to St. Peter, "It is the Lord." As soon as Simon Peter hears this, he girds his coat about him, and casts himself into the sea. The other disciples come to the land in the ship with the fishes; and they find hot coals lying, and a fish laid thereon, and bread. Our Lord tells them to bring to him some of the fishes which they had caught. St. Peter draws the net to land full of great fishes, and the net was not broken. Our Lord then tells them to come and dine; they know it is the Lord. When they sit down Jesus comes and takes bread and gives it them, together with the fish to eat. When the dinner is finished, he addresses himself to St. Peter and says: "Simon son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee; and he saith to him feed my lambs. He saith to him again, Simon son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him the third time, Simon son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he had said to him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said to him, Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him, Feed my sheep." (*a*)

Our Lord by this declaration constitutes St. Peter and his successors the vicars and pastors of his Church, and then imparts to St. Peter even more joyful intelligence than this; for he tells him that the death of the martyr was to be his privilege: "Amen, amen I say to thee: when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not." (*b*)

(*a*) St John, xxi. 1–17. (*b*) St. John, xxi. 18.

After the ascension of our Lord, the apostles returned to Jerusalem, and, assembled there, they proceed to the election of a successor to Judas. There St. Peter exercises his first act of jurisdiction, by presiding at the council that was held when Matthias was elected an apostle.

On the day of Pentecost the apostles receive, in the upper room where our Lord had instituted the sacrifice of the Mass, the Holy Ghost. (*a*) Some time after this St. Peter consecrates St. James Bishop of Jerusalem; and in the year 34 celebrates another council, in the upper room. On the day of Pentecost, the Jews had accused the apostles of being full of new wine. St. Peter refutes their calumnies, and shows it was only a fulfilment of the predictions of the prophets; and so powerful is the sermon he preaches on the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, that three thousand persons are converted and baptized. A few days after this St. Peter and St. John go up to the temple, where they meet, at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, a man who was lame from his mother's womb, and who was laid every day in the temple. He asks St. Peter and St. John for alms. St. Peter tells him that he has no silver or gold to give him, but bids him, "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth arise and walk." (*b*) The people, astonished at beholding the wonderful miracle, assemble in Solomon's porch, where St. Peter addresses them with such wonderful effect, that five thousand persons were converted. With his shadow many extraordinary cures are performed, and in the name of Jesus of Nazareth he performed many miracles.

The Holy Ghost had wrought a great change in him, for to his courage and boldness are united humility, gentleness and patience; always ready to yield to others, he humbles himself to every one. Ever desirous of being the servant of all, he never seems to exercise the authority with which he is invested unless when the duty of God requires it.

The Jewish priests and the Sadducees, jealous of the conversions which St. Peter had effected, and of the miracles which he wrought, cause him to be imprisoned along with St. John. On the next day

(*a*) Acts, ii. 1. (*b*) Acts, iii. 6–10.

they are brought before the princes, the ancients, and the scribes, who are assembled in council, together with the high-priest Annas and his kinsmen. There St. Peter declares to them, "that it is by the name of Jesus of Nazareth that this man standeth before them whole." As the assembled Sanhedrim could not deny the miracle, they call in St. Peter and St. John, and charge them not to speak nor teach in the name of Jesus. This the apostles refuse to do, and say to them: "If it be just in the sight of God, to hear you rather than God judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (*a*) The apostles were then set at liberty.

Those who had become Christians had their attention fixed on the great blessings which they enjoyed on becoming members of the Church. Worldly riches and honors had no value in their sight; therefore the wealthy amongst them sold their possessions, and laid the money for which they sold them at the apostles' feet—who would make an equal distribution of the different sums thus presented to them, amongst the members of the Church who were in need of it. Amongst the different persons who sold their property, there was a certain man named Ananias, and Saphira his wife; they sold their field for a certain price, (and, by fraud, kept back part of it,) and laid it down at the apostles' feet—the wife being conscious of this. Peter, as the chief of the apostles, deemed it to be his duty to check this fraudulent mode of acting, in the infancy of the Church, and he asks Ananias why Satan had tempted his heart, that he should lie to the Holy Ghost, and keep back, through fraud, part of the price of the field, and he shows him the nature of the fraud he had committed: "Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? and being sold, was it not in thy power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied to men but to God." (*b*) As soon as Ananias had heard these words, he fell down and gave up the ghost. The young men who were present remove his body, and take it out and bury it. About three hours after this event had taken place, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in, and St. Peter asks her whether she had sold the field for so much; and she says, in reply, that she had sold it for this sum. St.

(*a*) Acts, iv. 19, 20. (*b*) Acts, v. 4.

Peter says, in reply to her: "Why have you agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out."(*a*) And she immediately fell down dead before his feet; and the young men who had carried her husband to the grave perform the same office for her, and bury her beside her husband. This circumstance produced a good effect upon the whole Church, and upon all that heard of these things.

CHAPTER II.

THE APOSTLES BROUGHT BEFORE THE COUNCIL. — PRUDENT COUNSEL OF GAMALIEL. — ST. PETER AT JOPPE. — HE MEETS WITH CORNELIUS.

THE apostles had given proofs of their divine mission by working a great number of miracles. These circumstances excited the indignation of the high-priest and of the other members of the Sanhedrim, especially as many sick persons had been healed by the mere shadow of St. Peter passing over them; and persons afflicted with diseases were brought from the neighboring cities, and were cured of their diseases by the miraculous powers which the apostles exercised. Such as were troubled with unclean spirits were also healed. The high-priest and the Sadducees resolved to put an end to this, and they therefore laid hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the doors of the prison, and leading them out bid them go to the temple, and preach there "all the words of this life." (*b*) The officers in the morning are much astonished, at finding the prison shut but no man within. Whilst the chief priest and those assembled with him are in doubt as to what had become of them, a certain man comes and tells them that the men whom they put in prison are teaching the people in the temple. The magistrates, when they heard this,

(*a*) Acts, v. 9. (*b*) Acts, v. 20.

go and bring them without violence—for they fear the people, lest they should be stoned. When the apostles are brought before the council, and the high-priest reminds them of the charge that had already been given them that they should not teach in the name of Jesus, and how they had disobeyed this command, and had filled Jerusalem with their doctrine, and would bring the blood of "this man" (for so the high-priest calls our Lord) upon them—to this St. Peter, in the name of the apostles, replies, "that we ought to obey God rather than man;" (*a*) and he then openly charges the high-priest and those assembled with him, as having put to death Jesus, whom God had now raised up, and exalted with his right hand to give penitence to Israel and remission of sins; and he further adds, that he and the other apostles are witnesses of these things, and "the Holy Ghost, whom God had given to all who obey him." (*b*) The high-priest and the assembly, when they had heard these things, were cut to the heart, and but for the prudent counsel of Gamaliel, would have put them to death—who told them that, if it be the design or work of men, the preaching of the apostles will fall to nothing; but that if it be of God, they could not destroy it. The council hearken to the words of Gamaliel, and scourge the apostles, and charge them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and after this dismiss them. The apostles leave them, rejoicing that they were deemed worthy to suffer reproach for the name of their Lord and Master; and they continue their preaching and teaching from house to house.

The number of those who joined the Church increased from day to day, and a great number of the priests embrace the faith. This wondrous triumph of the Church, and the progress which religion is making, stir up the hatred and the enmity of its opponents against the faithful, and a great persecution is raised against the Church. St. Stephen is stoned and put to death, and all the faithful, except the apostles, are dispersed through the countries of Judea and Samaria. In the latter city, Philip, one of the seven deacons, had converted many by his preaching and had performed many miracles. St. Peter and St. John go down to Samaria to strengthen the faith

(*a*) Acts, v. 29. (*b*) Acts, v. 32.

of the converts, by administering to them the sacrament of confirmation. Amongst those whom Philip had converted was a person named Simon Magus. He had been a magician, and had seduced the people of Samaria, giving himself out to be some great person. When he saw the number of men and women that had been baptized by Philip, he also believes and is baptized. When he beholds that by the laying on of the hands of the apostles the Holy Ghost is given, he offers to give money to St. Peter if he should confer the same power on him, and enable him to impart the Holy Ghost on whomsoever he would lay his hands. St. Peter replies to his request in the following words: "May thy money perish with thee, because thou hast esteemed the gift of God to be purchased with money. Thou hast no part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Do penance, therefore, from this thy wickedness, and pray to God, that perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee, for I see thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity." (*a*)

Peace is once more restored to the Church, throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. St. Peter, in the course of his missionary labors and the apostolical superintendence which, as prince of the apostles, he bestowed on the Church, visits Lydda, where he finds a certain man named Eneas, lying on his bed for eight years, who was ill of the palsy. St. Peter says to him: "Eneas, the Lord Jesus healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed; and immediately he arose." (*b*) The apostle also visits Joppe, where a certain disciple named Tabitha, who was full of good works and alms-deeds, becomes sick and dies. When they had laid her out in an upper chamber, the disciples sent to Lydda for St. Peter, who, when he was arrived, is brought by the faithful into the upper chamber where the good woman was laid out. There St. Peter finds assembled all the widows weeping, who show him the garments which Dorcas (for so also the good woman was called) had made for them. St. Peter, having put them all out, kneels down and prays, and turning to the body he said: "Tabitha, arise;" (*c*) and she opens her eyes and sits up; and he gives her his hand and raises her up, and

(*a*) Acts, viii. 19–22. (*b*) Acts, ix. 34. (*c*) Acts, ix. 40.

presents her alive to the saints and the widows. This is made known through all Joppe, and many believe on the Lord.

St. Peter sojourns many days at Joppe, in the house of Simon, a tanner, for there the Lord had wondrous work for him to perform. Whilst he is staying at Joppe, St. Peter, on a certain day, about the sixth hour, goes up into the higher parts of the house to pray, and whilst they are preparing something for him to eat, he falls into an ecstasy, and he sees heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down by the four corners from heaven to earth; in this are all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the air, and he hears a voice saying to him: "Arise, Peter, kill and eat;" (*a*) and Peter, in reply to this, says: "Far be it from me, Lord, for I have never eaten any common and unclean thing." Again, a second time, he hears the same voice speaking to him, and saying: "That which God hath purified, do not thou call common." (*b*) This was done three times. Whilst St. Peter is doubting what this means, and what could be the nature of the vision, certain persons come from Cornelius, a centurion who dwelt at Cesarea—he was a religious man and feared God—in compliance with directions which had been given him in a vision, to request him to come with them to Cesarea. St. Peter again hears the Spirit addressing him and saying: "Behold, three men seek thee. Arise, therefore; go down, and go with them doubting nothing, for I have sent them."(*c*) St. Peter goes down to them, and they tell him how that Cornelius had received answer of a holy angel to send for him into his house, and to hear words from him. St. Peter lodges them in the house for that night, and on the day following he goes with them, some of those from Joppe accompanying him.

When St. Peter arrives at Cesarea, he meets Cornelius, and goes in with him to his house, and finds many of the friends of Cornelius assembled there; and he tells them that they knew how abominable a thing it was for a man who was a Jew to keep company with any person of other nations; but that God had shown him how he was to call nothing common or unclean; therefore he came when he was

(*a*) Acts, x. 13. (*b*) Acts, x. 14, 15. (*c*) Acts, x. 20.

sent for. He desires also to know the cause of their sending for him. To this Cornelius replies in the following words: "Four days ago, until this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold a man stood before me in white apparel, and said: Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thy alms are remembered in the sight of God. Send, therefore, to Joppe, and call hither Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of one Simon, a tanner, by the sea-side. Immediately, therefore, I sent to thee, and thou hast done well in coming. Now, therefore, all we are present in thy sight, to hear all things whatsoever are commanded thee by the Lord."(*a*)

St. Peter, in reply to the request made to him by Cornelius and his friends, said to them: "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh justice, is acceptable to him." (*b*) He then proceeds to tell them how the word of God had been published through all Judea, and how our Lord had gone about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, and that he and the other apostles were the witnesses of these things, as they were also of his resurrection. He then declares to them how they were commanded to preach to the people, and to testify that our Lord hath been appointed to be Judge of the living and of the dead.

Whilst St. Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that were hearing the word. This caused much astonishment amongst the members of the Church who had been Jews; for they wondered that the grace of the Holy Ghost was also poured out upon the Gentiles, and that they should hear them speak with tongues and magnify God.

St. Peter then asked them: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (*c*) And he then commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Thus was the Vicar of Christ deputed to receive the Gentiles within the fold of the Church.

Through the kindness of the Emperor Tiberius, who showed much favor to the Church, the spirit of persecution which had been raised

(*a*) Acts, x. 30-33. (*b*) Acts, x. 34, 35. (*c*) Acts, x. 47.

against it ceased, and peace was at length restored to it. The apostles left Jerusalem to spread the doctrines of Christianity; and they commenced with Syria, and with the countries which were situated near Jerusalem and Judea. St. Peter departs from Judea, and proceeds to Syria, the capital of which was Antioch.

St. Jerome, Eusebius, and the ancient writers agree in their statements respecting Antioch being the first episcopal see of St. Peter, and that the apostle governed this city during the space of seven years.

St. Gregory the Great informs us in one of his Epistles, (*a*) that the faithful were first called Christians in this city. It was but just that the prince of the apostles should be its first pastor. During the period that St. Peter ruled the see of Antioch, he was constant in making missionary tours into other countries, that he might convert all who desired to become members of the Church. He preached the faith to the Gentiles in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia.

About the year 37, St. Peter was visited by St. Paul in Jerusasalem, who spent fifteen days with him, and acquaints him with his conversion, and acknowledges him to be the supreme head of the Church.

In the divisions which the apostles made of the different places where they proposed to preach the gospel, St. Peter selected the city of Rome, the capital of the world, as the principal theatre of his apostolic labors. This city the prince of darkness had caused to become the centre of superstition and error. Here wickedness reigned in its basest forms, and superstition exercised its influence by the worship of false gods. Rome had become the centre of power and of all earthly authority, being raised to this high position in accordance with the designs of Providence, who had desired that through these means the Church might be propagated, and the gospel spread throughout the world. It was the design of our blessed Lord to plant the rock on which his Church was founded in the metropolis of the world, in order that the faith might be spread with the greater rapidity, and with greater ease, amongst the na-

(*a*) Lib. vii., Epist. 40.

tions who were subject to the dominion of that city, which was afterwards to be called the eternal city.

The many difficulties which surrounded the great object which the apostle had in view only increased his zeal, and made him anxious to perform greater acts of devotion in behalf of the Church of which he was the supreme head.

CHAPTER III.

MARSILIUS'S HOSTILITY TO POPE JOHN XXII.—HIS ASSERTION THAT ST. PETER HAD NEVER BEEN AT ROME.—TESTIMONY PROVING THAT HE HAD.

St. Peter having arrived at the capital of the Roman empire, and having, as it were, by his presence taken possession of the city of Rome, was faithful to the trust which had been committed to him, and with zeal and diligence preached the gospel to all who were willing to receive its powerful influences. On his way there he had planted the faith in different places: at Pisa, in Sicily, and at Naples. In the latter city he is said to have consecrated its first bishop, having said mass on an altar which was erected on the spot where afterwards was built the Church of St. Peter ad Aram.

The year 40, or, as some authors affirm, the year 45, is fixed as the date of the arrival of the apostle in the city of Rome; who also state that on the 18th of January he established his see there, having translated it from Antioch. Before the fourteenth century no person, however hostile he was to the holy see, had ventured to deny that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome, and had dwelt for many years in the city of the Cæsars. Marsilius, of Padua, was the first person who advanced such a statement as this. On the death of Henry VII., Louis Duke of Bavaria claimed the Bavarian crown, to the exclusion of Frederic, the son of Albert I., of Austria. The Pontiff John XXII., having espoused the cause of Frederic, Marsilius, who was a firm supporter of Louis, offered every indignity to the holy see. He carried his hostility so far, that he denied all connection between St. Peter and the see of Rome. St. Peter, he said,

had never been at Rome, and, consequently, that John XXII., who claimed supremacy over the Catholic world, as the successor of St. Peter, the first Bishop of Rome, claimed that supremacy without any lawful grounds, and consequently he was not the supreme pontiff. Errors against the plainest facts of history were followed by errors against the faith of the Church, and as the number of those who departed from the faith increased they adopted the statements of Marsilius. Wickliffe, and after him Luther, joined in making these false statements. Calvin seems also unwilling to allow the fact of St. Peter's ever having been at Rome, for the extent of his admissions respecting it amount to this: "that there is nothing repugnant in the statement." Since the days of Calvin there have been many writers who have maintained that St. Peter was never at Rome; but the great and learned men of every creed and of every country have ever zealously vindicated the truth of history, and have been zealous in their maintaining the connection of St. Peter with the see of Rome. The result of this has been, that the fact of St. Peter's residence in the eternal city has been established on a firmer basis than almost any other circumstance connected with the history of that time.

Cave, Pearson, Whiston, Young, Blondel, and others, all authors of eminence, and opposed to the supremacy of the Holy See, have written against the system of Marsilius, and have united with the most eminent Catholic writers in showing the fallacies contained in the writings of those who suppose that St. Peter never had been at Rome.

It may prove both interesting, in connection with a life of the apostle, and also instructive, to enter into a consideration of this matter. To do this effectually it will be necessary to divide the subject into distinct heads. In the first place, the testimony of some of the leading writers of the four or five first centuries, who have left us a record of their opinions respecting this matter, will be adduced; in the second place, the causes will be assigned which are said to have drawn the great apostle to Rome; and, in the third place, some facts of a local character will be stated, and which cannot be explained by any other means than by allowing the residence of the apostle in the eternal city.

Cave, a writer opposed to the supremacy of the Holy See, has well observed, that if there be one fact of history which is affirmed continuously, it is this of St. Peter's residence in the holy city. Should you reject this, the only conclusion you can come to is, that history is a mighty conspiracy against truth, and we must become skeptical with respect to all matters which are recorded in it.

The first testimony which shall be adduced are the words of Eusebius, in which he refers to the statement of Papias, and Clement of Alexandria, both of whom lived in the second century: "Under the reign of Claudius, by the benign and gracious providence of God, Peter, that powerful and great apostle, who, by his courage, took the lead of all the rest, was conducted to Rome, against the pest of mankind, [Simon Magus.] He was a noble general [appointed] of God, armed with heavenly weapons; he brought the precious merchandise of intellectual light from the east to the dwellers in the west, announcing the light itself, and salutary doctrine of the soul, the proclamation of the kingdom of God. The divine word having been thus established among the Romans, the power of Simon was soon extinguished and destroyed, together with the man. So greatly, however, did the spirit of piety enlighten the minds of Peter's hearers, that it was not sufficient to hear but once, nor to receive the unwritten doctrine of the gospel of God, but they persevered, in every variety of entreaties, to solicit Mark, as the companion of St. Peter, and whose Gospel we have, that he should leave them a monument of the doctrine thus orally communicated, in writing; nor did they cease their solicitations until they had prevailed with the man; and thus become the means of that history which is called The Gospel according to St. Mark. They say, also, that the apostle, [Peter,] having ascertained what was done, by the revelation of the Spirit, was delighted with the zealous ardor expressed by these men, and that the history obtained his authority for the purpose of being read in the churches. This account is given by Clement, in the sixth book of his Institutions, whose testimony is corroborated by that of Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis." (*a*)

(*a*) Eusebius, l. ii. c. 14, 15.

The Papias here spoken of flourished about the year118. Probably he was the disciple of the apostle St. John, and the friend of St. Polycarp. What we know of him for certain is this, that he was most diligent in collecting all kinds of facts regarding the apostles, from those who had been intimately acquainted with them. "If," he says, "I meet with any one who had been a follower of the elders anywhere, I made it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders, what was said by Andrew, Peter, or Philip, what by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; what was said by Aristion, and the presbyter John, disciples of the Lord; for I do not think that I derived so much benefit from books as from the living voice of those that are still surviving." (*a*)

This same century supplies us with three other ecclesiastical writers who have referred to the residence of St. Peter at Rome. Caius, who visited Rome during the pontificate of Zephyrinus, thus refers, in his Disputations with Proclus, to the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul: "I can show you the trophies of the apostles, for, if you will go to the Vatican, or to the Ostian road, you will find the trophies of those who have laid the foundation of this [the Roman] Church." (*b*)

And the illustrious prelate St. Dionysius of Corinth, who became bishop in 170, in his Address to the Romans, speaking of the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul, says: "Thus likewise you, by means of this admonition, have mingled the flourishing seed that had been planted by Peter and Paul at Rome and Corinth, for both of these having planted us at Corinth, likewise instructed us; and having in like manner taught in Italy, they suffered martyrdom about the same time." (*c*)

St. Iræneus, a more learned writer than any of those hitherto cited, and who was born about the middle of the second century, presents us with the following testimonies connected with this subject: "Matthew produced his Gospel, written among the Hebrews, in their own dialect, whilst Peter and Paul proclaimed the gospel and founded the Church at Rome." (*d*) He repeats this testimony

(*a*) Euseb. l. iii. c. 39. (*b*) Ib. l. ii. c. 25. (*c*) Ib. (*d*) Ib. l. v. c. 3

in his famous work against heresies, in the following terms: "But as it would be a very long task to enumerate in such a volume as this, the successions of all the churches, pointing out the tradition which is the greatest, and most ancient, and universally known Church, founded and constituted at Rome, by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul, derives from the apostles, and that faith announced to all men, which, through the succession of [her] bishops, has come down to us. We confound all those who in any way assemble otherwise than as behooveth them." (*a*)

The establishment of the Church of Rome, through the ministry of St. Peter and St. Paul, is spoken of here again as a fact beyond question. That Church was most universally known; its origin was best investigated and established, and this is the result of the inquiry: St. Peter had been at Rome, and had founded the Church there.

The third century offers us the voluminous writings of the first African ecclesiastical author, Tertullian. Over and over again he refers to St. Peter's founding the Roman Church and dying there. "Come now, thou who wilt exercise thy curiosity to better purpose, run over the apostolic chairs of the apostles to this very time; preside over their own places in which their own authentic letters are read, echoing the voice and making the face of each present. Is Achaia near, then thou hast Corinth; if thou art not far from Macedonia, thou hast Philippi, thou hast the Thessalonians; if thou canst travel into Asia, thou hast Ephesus; but if thou art near Italy, thou hast Rome, whence an authority is ready at hand to us. Oh, how happy is that Church in which the apostles have poured out all their doctrine with their blood, where Peter had a like passion with his Lord, where Paul is crowned with an end like the Baptist, where the apostle John was plunged into boiling oil!" (*b*)

In other writings besides that from which the above quotation has been made, he refers constantly to the planting of the faith and the death of St. Peter at Rome. He, like all the other authorities, speaks confidently, his words evidently regarding it as an acknowledged fact; not a thing to be proved but a matter of public notoriety.

(*a*) Here. l. iii. c. 3. (*b*) De Pros. n. 35, 36.

Origen has left us the tradition of former times relative to the countries assigned to each of the apostles for the work of the ministry; speaking of St. Peter he says: "Peter appears to have preached through Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia, to the Jews that were scattered abroad, who also, finally coming to Rome, was crucified, with his head downwards, himself having requested to suffer in that way." (*a*)

Lactantius, in his work on the death of the persecutors, and also in his fourth book on the true wisdom, agrees with the preceding writers. In the former work he states: "When Nero reigned, Peter came to Rome, and having wrought some miracles, which he effected by the might of the Almighty power to this effect being given to him by him, he converted many to justice, and raised up to God a faithful and enduring temple. When Nero was informed of this, and he saw that, not only at Rome but everywhere, a great multitude day by day abandoned the worship of idols and passed over to the new religion, to the rejection of the ancient one, being, as he was, an execrable tyrant, he rushed forward to destroy the heavenly temple, and the first of all others persecuting the servants of God, he affixed Peter to a cross and Paul he slew." (*b*)

Eusebius's sentiments with regard to St. Peter's visit to Rome have already been alluded to. He repeats the same remarks, not once or twice but several times, and in such a manner as to convince the reader that what he states was universally believed to be true.

St. Peter of Alexandria, who was martyred A. D. 311, after he had governed the see of that city for eleven years, speaks of the prince of the apostles in the following terms: "Peter, the ruler of the apostles, after having been often seized and imprisoned, and ignominiously treated, was at length crucified at Rome." (*c*)

St. Optatus of Melevis defies even the Donatists, the worst and most daring enemies of the Church, to deny that St. Peter had been at Rome: "Thou canst not, then, deny that thou knowest that the episcopal chair was given, in the city of Rome, to Peter the first of all others, in which Peter, the head of all the apostles, sat. . . . . .

(*a*) Eusebius, l. iii. c. 1. (*b*) De Morte Persec. c. ii. p. 523.
(*c*) Apud Galland, t. iv., p. 98.

Peter, therefore, first filled that pre-eminent chair which is the first mark of the Church. To him succeeded Linus." (*a*)

St. Jerome, who was well acquainted with the history of the Church of Rome, having resided there for a long period, and acted as secretary to one of the pontiffs, Pope Damasus, thus mentions St. Peter, in his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers: "Simon Peter, the son of John, of the province of Galilee, from the village of Bethsaida, the brother of Andrew the apostle, and the prince of the apostles, after his episcopate in the Church of Antioch, and his preaching to those scattered about, of the circumcision, who had believed, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, goes to Rome, in the second year of Claudius, to overthrow Simon Magus; and there he held the sacerdotal chair for five-and-twenty years, down to the last, that is to the 14th year of Nero. Buried at Rome, in the Vatican, near the triumphal way, he is honored by the veneration of the whole city."

Rufinus, the opponent of St. Jerome, is as clear on this head as any other writer: "Peter," he says, "ruled the Roman Church for twenty-four years." (*b*)

St. Augustine constantly appeals to the authority of that chair at Rome in which Peter sat: "Nay," he says, in his work against the Letters of Petilian, "if all throughout the world were such as you most idly slander them, what has the chair of the Roman Church, in which St. Peter sat, and in which Anastasius now sits, done to this?" The east knew as well as the west of St. Peter's journey to Rome; the Christians of Antioch pointed with pride to St. Peter as the founder of their see, but they were forced to admit that Antioch could not keep for ever the prince of the apostles as its bishop.

"This," writes St. John Chrysostom, "is one of the privileges of this our city, [Antioch,] that it had at first as teacher the leader of the apostles. For it was befitting that that city which, before the rest of the world, was crowned with the Christian's name, should receive as shepherd the first of the apostles; but after having had him as our teacher, we did not retain him, but surrendered him to regal Rome." (*c*)

(*a*) De Schis. Don. ii. 2–4. (*b*) Invect. in S. Hieron, 2, p. 661.
(*c*) T. 111, Home 24.

"It [Rome] contains within it," says Theodoret, "the tombs of our common fathers and teachers of the truth, Peter and Paul—tombs which illuminate the souls of the faithful. Their thrice-blessed and divine twin star rose indeed in the east, but had the settling of its existence by choice in the west, and thence even now illuminates the whole world. These have made your throne most illustrious; this is the culminating point to your blessings; and their God has even now made illustrious their throne, having established thereon your Holiness, emitting the rays of orthodoxy." (*a*)

This letter was addressed to Pope Leo. Every expression and allusion obviously regards the unvarying tradition of St. Peter's preaching and dying at Rome.

Pope Innocent's words would seem at first sight nearly a transcript of those of St. Chrysostom which we have just adduced: "Observe," he writes, "that this [privilege] has been assigned to this city [Antioch] not so much on account of its magnificence, as because it is known to have been the first see of the first apostle, where the Christian faith took its name, and has had the honor to have held within it a most celebrated assembly of the apostles—a city which would not yield to the see of the city of Rome, save that it was honored by him but temporarily, whereas this city [Rome] glories in having received him to herself, and that he here consummated [his martyrdom]." (*b*)

The testimony of another pontiff will draw this first part of the argument to a conclusion.

Pope Gelasius thus clearly and elegantly expresses himself with respect to the prince of the apostles: "There were assuredly twelve apostles, endowed with equal merits and equal dignity, and whereas they all shone equally with spiritual light, yet it was Christ's will that one amongst them should be the chief, and him by an admirable dispensation did he guide to Rome, the queen of nations, that in the principal or first city he might direct that first and principal [apostle] St. Peter." (*c*)

(*a*) T. 4, Ep. 113. (*b*) Ep. 24. n. 1. (*c*) T. 10, Galland, p. 677.

CHAPTER IV.

SIMON MAGUS. — HE PROMISES TO FLY TO THE HEAVENLY ABODES. — STRUCK TO THE EARTH AT THE PRAYER OF ST. PETER. — HIS DEATH. — ST. AUGUSTINE'S STATEMENT.

It has already been stated that one of the causes of St. Peter's going to Rome is frequently referred to by the fathers of the Church, and assists much in elucidating the truth of the events connected with the residence of St. Peter in Rome, and seems to confirm a fact which the east and the west, Greece and Italy, Africa and Gaul, have believed in for more than eighteen centuries.

According to Eusebius, St. Jerome, and Orosius, St. Peter visited Rome for the first time in the 2d year of Claudius the emperor, which corresponds with the forty-second of the Christian era; and he went thither, if we may believe the statements of Eusebius and St. Jerome, in order to silence the heresiarch Simon Magus: "Immediately under the reign of Claudius . . . . Peter, the powerful and great apostle . . . . was conducted to Rome against this pest of mankind." (*a*)

St. Jerome also bears testimony to the same fact: "Simon, the son of John, ... the brother of Andrew the apostle, and the prince of the apostles, goes to Rome, in the second year of Claudius, to overthrow Simon Magus." (*b*)

Of this infamous man Magus, St. Justin makes distinct and detailed mention in his first Apology, addressed to Antoninus Pius. We are told that he was a Samaritan, of the village of Giton, was versed in magic, and was so successful in the practice of his art as to become at first the wonder and glory of the Romans, and eventually the object of their adoration. He informs us farther of the time when this man flourished, the place where his statue was set up, the inscription it bore: "To Simon the holy god;" and he also tells

(*a*) Galland, l. ii. c. 14. (*b*) Cat. Scrip. Ecc. 1.

us that his companion was an abandoned person of the name of Helena. He also proceeds to exhort the emperor to communicate these particulars to the Senate and the people, in order "that if any of them should chance to be entangled by the doctrines of Magus, they might at length free themselves from the trammels of error;" and finally he prays "that the statue raised to the impostor might be taken down." (*a*)

With equal distinctness Tertullian alludes to the heresiarch, and rebukes the Romans for adoring such a worthless man.

Vincent of Lerins, in his Commonitory, refers to the overthrow of Magus, who has been emphatically called by the fathers, "the parent of heretics:" "Was not Simon Magus the first so deservedly smitten by the apostolic sword? . . . . Was not this conjurer, I say, the first who had the face to charge God the Creator as the author of all evil?" (*b*)

But there are still more particular statements to be made with respect to St. Peter himself. Arnobius wrote his Apology either at the close of the third or as early in the fourth century as the year 303. In the second book of this work the following words occur: 'The men were engaged by the arts of King Numa, and the ancient superstitions in this city, [Rome,] still they did not hesitate about abandoning the concerns of their country, and uniting in the admission of Christian truth, for they beheld the car of Simon Magus and his fiery steeds blown away by the truth of Peter, and brought to nothing at the name of Christ."

It appears that even the catechumens were instructed about this event, for St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in his Sixth Catechetical Address, tells them: "The error of Simon spreading farther and farther, the illustrious pair of men, Peter and Paul, the rulers of the Church, corrected it by going thither, who soon exhibited as dead the putative god, on his appearance; for when Simon had declared that he would ascend aloft into heaven, ... the servants of God . . . . cast him headlong on the earth; . . . . and though this occurrence was wonderful in itself, it was not wonderful under the circumstances, for it was Peter who did it, he who bears with him the keys

(*a*) Apol. i. c. 34. (*b*) Common. c. 30.

of heaven; it is not worth our wonder, for it was Paul who did it, he who was caught up into the third heaven."

St. Cyril's testimony agrees with those already cited, as to the main facts of the magician's defeat at Rome by St. Peter. In one respect, however, he differs from the writers already cited, for he supposes this event to have taken place in the reign of Nero, and not in the time of Claudius. Many writers agree with Cyril in placing the downfall of Simon Magus in the reign of Nero.

The legates of the holy see, in a letter to Eusebius of Vercelli, also make mention of this event: "For the Lord and his Christ know that on the arrival of the most blessed apostles, the name of God is glorified in the overthrow of Simon."

St. Pacian plainly refers to this well-known story: "Does not Peter confound Simon in the presence of the judge? does not Paul blind Elymas?" (*a*)

Epiphanius, when writing on the heresy of the Simonians, refers to the occurrence in the following words: "Simon, we know, paid the debt of Nature at Rome, when falling he dies miserably in the midst of the city of the Romans." (*b*)

St. Ambrose, in the work entitled Egesippus, which he wrote while still young and a catechumen, enters into greater detail. He tells us "that Simon promised to fly, and thus ascend to the heavenly abodes. On the day agreed upon he went to the Capitoline Hill, and, throwing himself from the rock, began his ascent. Then Peter, standing in the midst, said: "O Lord Jesus, show him that his arts are vain." Hardly had these words been uttered, when the wings which Simon had made use of became entangled, and he fell. His thigh was fractured, never to be healed; and some time afterwards the unhappy man died at Aretia, whither he had retired after his discomfiture."

In another of his works Epiphanius refers to the same fact: "Peter overthrew and laid prostrate Simon, as he soared to heaven by magic flight, by breaking the power of his charms."

Philostrius of Brixia, in his observations on the heresy of Simon, says "that when the heresiarch arrived in Rome where he would con-

(*a*) Epist. ii. ad Symb. (*b*) Heb. xxi. 5.

tend with the blessed apostle, [Peter,] in the presence of Nero the king, being completely overthrown by the power of the blessed apostle, and stricken by an angel, he merited such a death as made the evident lie of his magic patent to all men."

St. Augustine, the illustrious prelate of Africa, in several places distinctly alludes to St. Peter's overcoming Simon at Rome. In the beginning of his book on heresies, he says: "In which city [Rome] the apostle Peter overcame him by the true power of the Almighty God."

In answer to all these statements, which are so striking, and which so fully prove St. Peter's being at Rome, it is alleged by writers of an infidel turn of mind, that Simon is a myth, and his doings mere fabulous legends, or mere romances got up to adorn the life of St. Peter. For the following reasons this statement would appear to be devoid of truth. Those writers who have been referred to, as may be seen, speak absolutely about the personality and deeds of the impostor. Even the Apologists, as Justin, Tertullian, and Vincent of Lerins, speak in as plain terms about him as about any other well known individual; nor could they refer even emperors and a Roman senate to the history of a fictitious person, for by doing this they would render their own proceedings of no avail, and they would have materially injured the cause of Christianity. An inaccuracy of this nature would have done an amount of mischief which volumes of truths would not have sufficed to repair.

St. Augustine informs us, that as Æneas was proclaimed a god after his death, by the Latins, so was Sangus likewise by the Sabines, and therefore the inscription which was discovered with "Sangus" on it, refers to him, and is altogether different from the inscription recorded by Justin, and which has already been referred to; therefore the objection drawn from the discovery of this statue, and which the writers before referred to speak so much of, is of no avail, as it does not militate against the statement of Justin, who refers to a different statue and a different inscription altogether.

CHAPTER V.

ST. PETER DATES HIS FIRST EPISTLE FROM ROME. — TESTIMONY OF PAPIAS, VALESIUS, AND GROTIUS, TO THAT EFFECT.

If further proof be needed of the sojourn of St. Peter at Rome, the following reasons will supply this.

All critics of any weight or authority assert it, as a certain rule, that any circumstance which a writer of respectability, who lived either at the time or near the time when the event which he records took place, is to be believed, unless a writer of earlier date or one whose testimony is more worthy, does not profess to believe in it.

A public fact which all the faithful, and which even those who do not hold the faith, have believed to be true for fifteen centuries, must be supposed to have taken place, although there would be no other record for it in existence than the fact of its being believed in for so long a time.

When men write about public circumstances, and about matters referring to history, they satisfy themselves about the truth of these, not only from books and writings but also from public monuments, from inscriptions, and from privileges and immunities conferred on any particular city or state, for all these have authority in determining whether the matter referred to took place or not.

The law of nations and public faith require that credit should be given to any city or state recording those things, while those who relate them must have sufficient opportunity of knowing whether they took place or were connected with their public history.

All reasonings or arguments, unless they be direct historical proofs, are of no weight when adduced against a circumstance which is supported by cotemporaneous history, by unanimous consent, and by a tradition of many ages; and if what has been already stated be called to mind, it will be found that the journey of St. Peter to Rome is to be accounted amongst those facts which the

above rules relate to, for, as we have seen, it is referred to by Papias, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, and several other writers of the second or third century; and, as we shall see in the following chapters, there are public monuments existing in Rome, connected with St. Peter's stay in that city. The Roman pontiffs, from the time of SS. Peter and Paul, have maintained the supreme authority in the Church, and all the honors and privileges connected with this high position. The conclusion from all these proofs is evident —that St. Peter's visiting Rome rests upon such historical proofs, that all the arguments of those who profess to disbelieve it cannot call it into question.

But there is another argument remaining to be stated in connection with this subject. This is the testimony of St. Peter himself, who dates his first Epistle from Rome. As all eminent writers interpret this passage in his first Epistle: "The Church which is in Babylon, elected together, saluteth you." (*a*) In calling the city of Rome Babylon, the apostle seems to have been influenced by motives of prudence, that he might not indicate to the many enemies which he had, the place of his residence, and by his doing so, subject himself to constant persecution. This he was ever ready to suffer when it came upon him, but to bring it upon himself needlessly, might well be looked upon as a tempting of Providence. It should also be remembered that he was writing to those of Hebrew origin, who were familiar with figurative language, from perusing the writings of the prophets, which abound in this style of speech. It had been usual to call a wicked city, Sodom, a country given to idolatry, Egypt, a people under a curse, Chanaan, a city which was filled with wickedness, and which might be looked upon in the light of an enemy, Babylon. This city had been the place where their ancestors suffered captivity, and it had spoiled their ancestors of their country and of their kingdom. Pagan Rome resembled this in many respects; for it had reduced Judea into a province, and had already persecuted the Christians, and stirred up the hatred of its inhabitants against them.

When St. Peter dwelt at Rome, and when he wrote to the

(*a*) C. v. 13.

strangers dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, it was natural to call Rome by the name of Babylon, being the name by which these persons, as ancient writers tell us, were accustomed to call that city. Papias informs us, that St. Peter wrote his first Epistle at Rome, and that he referred to Rome, when he made use of these words: "The Church which is in Babylon, elected together, saluteth you." (*a*) And Valesius, a writer of note, states that those who wish to refer the Babylon spoken of by St. Peter to the eastern metropolis of that name, are going contrary to the opinion of eastern writers; and Grotius, a writer whose belief would have led him to have adopted a different opinion, if facts were not too strong against him, writes as follows: "The new and the old interpreters differ respecting Babylon. The old interpreters refer it to Rome, where no true Christian ever doubted that St. Peter had been; the new state that Babylon in Chaldea is meant by it; I, however, agree with the old." (*b*)

It also appears that the Jews, to whom St. Peter wrote his Epistle, would not be likely to apply Babylon to the city of that name which was in Chaldea, for it appears from the testimony of Pliny, that it was rather a heap of stones than a city. Strabo speaks of it as nearly altogether deserted; Diodorus speaks of it as having only its smallest part inhabited. They also add, that a short time before the reign of Claudius, in the reign of Caius, the Jews were banished from Babylon, and came to Seleucia.

Josephus gives a more detailed account of this event. He says, "that the Babylonians, Anilaus and his companions being put to death, attacked the Jews, who, deeming themselves not equal to enter into a contest with them, fled to Seleucia, where they were safe from any assault for fifty years; that six years after this a pestilence raged in the city, and that a few families of the Jews who had not yet migrated from the city, came to Seleucia, where a dreadful calamity overpowered them, for the Greeks and the Syrians, who were the inhabitants of the city, though hitherto they were not on good terms, entered into a league to destroy the Jews, and slew more than fifty thousand of them; and those who escaped from the

(*a*) 1 Peter, v. 13. (*b*) Grotius on 1 Peter v. 13.

slaughter went to Neesda and Nesbis, esteeming themselves safer there."

There was a village in Egypt called Babylon, which is now the modern Cairo. This appears to have been built by the Persians, when Cambyses, who was also king of Egypt, permitted the Persians to settle in that country. In the time of Strabo, one of the Roman legions, which had been emancipated in Egypt, retired there, as into a strong fortification; but there does not appear to have been either Jews or Christians residing there. Nor is it asserted by any eminent writer that St. Peter went there, or preached the gospel there. Nor does it appear to have had a bishop before the time of the Council of Chalcedon, according to Spanheim, whose name was Cyrus. Baronius, however, states, that the first bishop of this place was called Zosimus, and that in the fifth century, when Justin was emperor, he ruled over the church in that city. If St. Peter had established a church there, it could not have remained unknown through so many ages; and if he were writing to the Jews of this place, he would have added some word which would have marked it more distinctly, that there might not have been a possibility of confounding it with Babylon of Chaldea—a city which was nearer to them, and being more closely connected with their history, and with the various events which took place during the time they had dwelt in Palestine. Besides, it has never been shown that St. Peter crossed the Euphrates, or ever visited Babylon in Chaldea or Babylon in Egypt. Neither Scripture nor ecclesiastical history even allude to such an event ever having taken place. There is therefore no reason for departing from the usually received interpretation, and not supposing that St. Peter meant by Babylon the city of Rome.

The Jews to whom St. Peter wrote could not suppose that the apostle alluded either to Babylon in Chaldea or Babylon in Egypt, and, as we have seen, it was more natural that they should believe he referred to Pagan Rome, which, as a city filled with iniquity, might well be called Babylon.

The passage in the first Epistle of St. Peter, where he speaks of the church which is in Babylon, could not have remained unknown for so many centuries, as those who are not inclined to admit that

the apostle in these words refers to pagan Rome would have us believe. Whoever read the passage would at once come to the conclusion whether Babylon was to be understood in an allegorical sense or in a literal sense. The most illiterate as well as the most learned would soon make up their minds on this point, and having once done so, would not hastily change; they could not be at a very great loss to find out where St. Peter was when he wrote this Epistle, and then they would infer that he was purposing to designate that place by the name of Babylon. We do not find any person doubting that the apostle was at Rome when he wrote this Epistle.

Those who had read the Epistle would also be able to find out whether St. Peter was ever at Babylon or not, and also whether he was at Rome when he wrote the Epistle. It does not appear that any writer mentions any difference of opinion having existed respecting this matter; they all seem to conclude that by Babylon St. Peter intends to designate the city of Rome, then the capital of the pagan world. It would also seem that these persons held this as an apostolic tradition, which had been handed down to them by the apostles themselves, or by their disciples.

Modern writers would oppose this, though they adduce no arguments or authorities of any weight to corroborate their statements. The differences which exist in their interpretations of this passage show also their want of unity, and that they are destitute of that which has ever been looked upon as a mark of truth—agreement in the main facts of the statements which are made. The fathers and the Catholic interpreters have always taught, without any one attempting to deny it, from the first ages of the Church until the present day, that St. Peter, in his first Epistle, by Babylon intended to point out Rome, as the place from which he wrote his first Epistle. Their statement has met with no contradiction until of late years. The conclusion is evident that it must be looked upon as true.

It has been stated as an objection to St. Peter's being at Rome, that the different writers have not been agreed amongst themselves as to the exact year when he first came there; but this objection is of no weight, for though the writers may differ in their statements respecting the date of the apostle's coming to Rome, they all are

unanimous in maintaining the fact of his coming there. Lactantius places the time of St. Peter's coming to Rome in the reign of Nero; Eusebius, St. Jerome, and others fix the date in the second year of Claudius. Many of the ancient fathers say that he was bishop of Rome for twenty-five years. St. Paul, though dwelling at Rome, and having written many Epistles from it, nowhere mentions St. Peter. These also are urged as objections against the apostle's ever being at the capital of the pagan world. It is also added that Claudius, in the year 49, in the ninth year of his reign, banished all the Jews from Rome, therefore that St. Peter must have left it at that period.

It may be said in reply to those who maintain that St. Peter was never at Rome, because the writers differ about the year when he came there, that the Church affirms nothing respecting the time when St. Peter came to that city; all that it maintains is, that St. Peter was at Rome; and gives perfect liberty to follow the writer who maintains with the clearest arguments what seems to be the true date. Those who place the advent of St. Peter to Rome in the second year of Claudius, and those who maintain that he came there when that emperor began his reign, do not differ from each other; for when Claudius reigned thirteen years, the second year of this emperor may be called the beginning of his reign.

Though it may be maintained that St. Peter was bishop of Rome for twenty-five years, it is not to be inferred from thence that he remained there during all that time; for, as the necessities of the Church required it, he could go to the east or the west, and yet not have given up his see, as the bishops who, in the present time, are obliged to visit the holy city, are not said to have given up their see, because they go away from it for a short time; and from the second year of Claudius to the last year of Nero a space of exactly twenty-five years intervened. Nor is there any difficulty in reconciling those statements which differ from each other; for it is probable that St. Peter came to Rome, according to the opinion of St. Jerome, Eusebius, and other writers, in the second year of the reign of Claudius, and then left it for some time; but returned again in the 12th or 13th year of the reign of Nero, shortly before he suffered martyrdom; and, being cast into prison, suffered

together with St. Paul, in the year 66, on the 29th of June, the day in which the Church celebrates their martyrdom.

Nor is there any thing strange in St. Paul, in writing to others from Rome, or in writing to the Romans his Epistle, not mentioning St. Peter, when St. Peter was absent from Rome at that time. It is stated as a strong objection against the apostle's being at Rome, that it is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles that the Jews dwelling at Rome, whom St. Paul questioned respecting the Christian religion, — and told the nature of the persecution he underwent, — that they stated the only knowledge they had respecting the Christian religion was that it was spoken against everywhere; for they told him: "For as concerning this sect we know that it is everywhere contradicted."(*a*) It would appear that these Jews were not of the fold of Christ, and, imbued with the false opinions which they had received from the calumnies and writings of the Hebrews, were acquainted with the Christian religion only by name; and when St. Paul came to Rome, they eagerly flocked to hear him. Knowing that he was a learned man, they were anxious to hear something more respecting the Christians against whom the synagogue had been so greatly excited; and although many of the Jews who dwelt at Rome, as also many of the heathens, had embraced the faith, as they did not frequent the synagogue, there is no difficulty in supposing that the Jews had not heard of the Epistle which St. Paul had written to the Romans; therefore it is natural to expect that they should be unacquainted with the labors both of St. Paul and St. Peter, in propagating the faith.

It would appear that when SS. Peter and Paul had resolved to devote themselves, one exclusively to the Jews, and the other to the Gentiles, they did not intend thereby to preclude themselves from preaching to either Gentiles or Jews, whenever an opportunity should present itself. St. Peter administered the sacrament of baptism to Cornelius and his entire household; and St. Paul, wherever he went, or in whatever city he dwelt, first preached the faith to the Jews and afterwards to the Gentiles, when there seemed to be a hope of converting them to the faith. St. Peter, without neglecting

(*a*) Acts, xxviii. 22.

the Gentiles, made it his duty to bring the Jews within the fold of the Church; and St. Paul followed a like course with respect to the Gentiles, always instructing them, without declining, whenever an opportunity presented itself, to make the Jews participators in the same blessings.

At Rome St. Peter would find an ample field for exercising his mission; for, when Herod died, Josephus informs us that the ambassadors who came from Jerusalem to Rome, to request that they might for the future be free from the government of the kings, brought twelve thousand Jews with them. (*a*) And Philo records that the part of Rome beyond the Tiber now called the Trastevere was chiefly inhabited by the Jews. (*b*) In the reign of Claudius there were so many Jews residing at Rome that he feared a tumult. He did not however dare to expel them from the city, but was content to forbid their assembling together. It appears, however, he expelled them in the ninth year of his reign, because, on account of the Christians, they were constantly engaging in tumultuous proceedings. (*c*)

It is very probable that St. Peter left Rome at this time, and returned in the sixth year of Nero, who did not persecute the Jews, but only exercised his cruel disposition in persecuting the Christians. Near the conclusion of the reign of Nero, all ancient writers affirm that St. Peter and St. Paul both returned to Rome, where they suffered martyrdom. The objection which is sometimes urged, from no mention being made in the Acts of the Apostles of St. Peter's being at Rome, is not of much force; for St. Luke does not profess to write a history of St. Peter, or to give an account of his life. After the sixteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, he seems altogether to forget St. Peter, in order that he may devote himself to give a lengthened account of the labors of St. Paul.

Spanheim, in order that he might invalidate the testimony which has been adduced to show that St. Peter was at Rome, has collected an immense number of legends respecting the places which St. Peter visited, also respecting the churches and altars which are said to have been consecrated by him and the bishops of the different cities

(*a*) Antiqu. l. 17, c. 12. (*b*) Legat ad Caium. (*c*) Suetonius in Claudio.

who were the companions of his journeys. To these he has added many circumstances which bear upon them the stamp of falsehood. But it is clear that these cannot invalidate the truth of the question which he wishes to disprove, that St. Peter was at Rome and lived there for many years, no more than the false statements and foolish stories which the Jews have connected with the life of our Lord and his apostles, would show that such a person never existed, and that he was not crucified in Jerusalem; for the duty of the critic is not to reject the principal facts of history because they may be sometimes colored with false assertions, but to select the true from the false, the certain from the doubtful, and genuine facts from the false adjuncts with which they may be encumbered.

But the labors of our adversaries do not even rest here, they make use of all possible means to weaken the force of the testimony of the writers which have been already adduced. They say that Papias was a credulous and simple-minded man, and believed in every story that he might chance to hear; they affirm that the quotations made from Ignatius are false, and that the Epistle which he wrote from Smyrna to the Romans is incorrectly attributed to him. They add to these assertions that Iræneus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen have committed many errors, both respecting time and places, in their writings, and are not therefore worthy of credit. This is however a very poor way to elude the authority of the fathers, and to seek to invalidate their writings. If the fathers and writers of the first three centuries are of no weight, and of no authority respecting matters of fact, what grounds have our adversaries for their opinions, and for the creeds which they profess to hold and to teach? Many of the dogmas of our holy religion are so closely connected with facts, and so interwoven with them, that they cannot be separated from them.

If we reject the testimony of Ignatius, of Clement of Alexandria, of Origen, of Tertullian, and of the writers of the three first centuries, where can we find other writers whose authority is of greater weight than these? If Origen and Tertullian erred in matters of faith, this will not serve to invalidate their testimony respecting a fact publicly known, and which was of such interest to religion in general, that it could not possibly remain unknown.

The only conclusion we can arrive at respecting this matter is that St. Peter came to Rome and was bishop of that see for twenty-five years, and that one of the principal objects he had in view when he came to that city, was to put an end to the evil machinations of Simon Magus; and that it also appears that the Babylon from which he dates his first Epistle is not to be taken as referring to Babylon in Egypt, nor Babylon in Chaldea, but that the apostle intends by this to refer to Rome.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHAINS OF ST. PETER IN THE CHURCH OF ST. PIETRO IN VINCOLI. — THE MAMERTINE PRISON THE PLACE OF HIS CONFINEMENT. — THE OSTIAN WAY, WHERE OUR LORD APPEARED TO ST. PETER. — CRUCIFIXION OF ST. PETER.

THERE are local circumstances connected with St. Peter's dwelling in the eternal city which will give additional weight to the arguments which have been already stated. In no other part of the world save in Rome shall we find spots pointed out as places hallowed by the imprisonment and crucifixion of the apostle, and also by his tomb; in no other city in the world are there existing monuments which refer to a person who lived eighteen centuries ago, such as those connected with St. Peter in Rome.

The hill on which he suffered is shown, and the spot is now hallowed by having a circular chapel erected over it, which has a dome supported by sixteen Doric columns of black granite, and was built at the expense of Ferdinand IV., the king of Spain; it is near the Church of St. Peter in Montorio, the hill called the Montorio being considered as part of the Vatican and not as part of the Janiculum. This spot appears to have been selected by Nero that he might be able to witness the martyrdom of the apostle from the palace in which he lived on the Palatine Hill. There St. Peter was crucified with his head downward, as he esteemed it too high an honor to be crucified like his divine Master.

The first Christians who hallowed, by lasting monuments, the

principal places which were made sacred by the footsteps of the apostles, were careful to mark this spot, which was rendered sacred by the death of St. Peter, and the Church of St. Peter in Montorio, has become one of the most beautiful in that part of the city of Rome.

"His chains also are shown, those chains which he wore to give liberty to the world. They may be seen in the Church of St. Pietro in Vincoli, at Rome, any day during the octave of the festival, or on the day in Lent on which the station is held there; at other times they are kept in a small silver box, which is placed in a large chest fastened by two locks, one key of which is kept by the abbot of the monastery, and the other by the major domo of the sacred palace, and is never opened without the written order of the pontiff, unless on the station in Lent and during the octave of the festival, when they are exposed on an altar in the church, over which is a painting of the miraculous deliverance of St. Peter from prison.

"Eudosia, the wife of the Emperor Theodosius the younger, going to Jerusalem, received there the chains with which the apostle was bound by Herod; these chains she afterwards sent to her daughter Eudoxia, to Rome, who gave them to the pope; he showed her another chain with which Nero had bound the same apostle, and when the pontiff placed the chains near each other, they became miraculously united, and form now but one chain; the different structure of the two parts of the chain is clearly marked." (*a*)

The place of his imprisonment is also shown. "The Mamertine prison is situated at the north-eastern extremity of the Capitoline Hill, and is said to have been erected by Ancus Martius. The prison is divided into the upper and lower. The descent into the first is by a modern staircase made when it was converted into a sacred place. The first prison is thirty feet long, twenty-two feet wide, and fourteen feet high; there was a hole in the roof through which the criminals were let down by a cord; under this was a similar hole leading to the lower prison, the descent to which is now by a modern staircase; this lower prison is twenty-two feet long, nine feet wide, and six feet high. An inscription in the wall of the

(*a*) Neligan's Rome, p. 135.

upper prison states it was restored by the consuls Vibrius and Coc ceus Nerva, in the year of Rome 574. Although the entrance was towards the capitol, the ascent to it was on the side of the forum, near the commencement of the steps called the Scala Gemonia. These steps joined the prison by means of a stone bridge; from their summit the bodies of criminals were thrown, in order to terrify the people who were in the forum.

"In this prison Jugurtha died of hunger; the accomplices of Cataline's conspiracy were strangled here; here, also, was put to death Aristobulus and Sejanus after the triumph of Pompey; Sejanus by the order of Tiberius, and Simon, the chief of the Jews, by the order of Titus. As the conqueror ascended to the capitol in triumphs, the prisoners were thrown into this lower prison, being brought there by the Scala Gemonia, where they were put to death; when this was accomplished the cry 'actum est'—it is done —told the conqueror he might now leave the temple.

"But other impressions than these fill the Christian as he enters this place. Here St. Peter and St. Paul were both imprisoned; from this place they were taken the day they went to execution. We kissed with respect the column to which they were bound, we drank water from the fountain which St. Peter caused to come forth from the floor, that he might baptize St. Processus and St. Martinianus, their jailors, with the twenty-seven soldiers, who were all martyred in their turn. There are altars in each of these prisons." (*a*)

The spot is also pointed out where he resided, and the altar on which he offered up the sacrifice of the Mass. These are now within the Church of St. Pudentiana.

"St. Peter having arrived at Rome about the year 44, with the desire of planting the cross on the summit of the capitol, went at first to the part of the city near the Tiber, being the quarter of the Jews. He soon converted the Senator Pudens, his mother Priscilla, and his two sons, Novatius and Timotheus, and his two daughters, Praxedes and Pudentiana, with their servants. The house of this devout neophyte soon became the residence of the apostle. There St. Peter celebrated the august mysteries, and consecrated Linus

(*a*) Neligan's Rome, pp. 79, 80.

and Cletus, this was no doubt the title of the Pastor which we so often read of in the early writers; whoever has seen those mosaics in the aisle near the altar, on which St. Peter so often said Mass, must be satisfied as to the antiquity of the place. Here, too, is the well into which these holy virgins squeezed the blood of martyrs which they had collected with sponges; here, too, they hid the bodies of the martyrs and their remains, which they had gathered up. Pius I., in the second century, changed the senatorial house into a church with the title of the Pastor. (*a*)

"On the Ostian Way is also shown the place where Christ appeared to St. Peter, and which is called '*Domine quo vadis.*' This church, founded in the early times of the Church, attests a fact which the Catholic pilgrim dwells on with pleasure. St. Peter had been confined in the Mamertine Prison, and was in daily expectation of the sentence being carried into execution which had been passed on him. The Christians, fearful of losing their chief pastor, had resolved to rescue him, and, having succeeded in their attempt, the saint was now outside the walls of the city, travelling on the Appian Way, by which he had entered Rome twenty-five years before. When he had arrived at the place where this church is now built, he perceived his divine Master coming to meet him, bearing his cross. Peter, recognizing him, said, '*Domine quo vadis.*' Our Lord replied, '*Venio iterum crucifigi.*' St. Peter understood him, and returned to Rome, and there awaited the cross on which his divine Master was about to suffer again, in the person of his vicar. The constant tradition of the faithful at Rome attests the truth of the apparition of our Lord; and St. Ambrose, in his discourse against Auxentius, alludes to it." (*a*)

Nor are these the only evidences which we have of the residence of the apostle in the holy city. The pictorial catalogue of the popes, as well as the mural and other inscriptions, all testify to the same fact. This everlasting pointing to the history of St. Peter, this inability to separate the city and the apostles, give us additional proof, if it be needed, of the residence of the apostle in the holy city. No other city claims the honors which Rome monopolizes, of having

(*a*) Neligan's Rome, pp. 69, 70. (*b*) Ibid., p. 271.

St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, as its first bishop. The world knows, and it has always known, that Rome was the city signally favored by God and St. Peter, and that there is no possibility of opposing the prescription which Rome can urge in its favor. "We must remember," writes one who seems to have examined these matters with impartiality, "that St. Peter was crucified on this hill, but was buried at the Vatican." I should be inclined to believe the latter tradition, and perhaps the former may also be true; but the place of his interment is more likely to have been kept in remembrance than that of his suffering. Even some Catholic writers have differed as to the precise spot where he was crucified. Eusebius appeals to a constant tradition that St. Peter was buried in a cemetery at the Vatican, and quotes the authority of Caius, who lived in the early part of the third century.

"Some writers have thought it necessary to deny that St. Peter was ever at Rome. I confess I am utterly at a loss to see what great advantage is given to Catholics by allowing their first pope to have resided at Rome. But, at all events, truth is to be preferred to prejudice. . . . . After examining the evidence produced by Baronius, the conclusion seems irresistible, that St. Peter undoubtedly visited Rome, and suffered martyrdom there. The only question is concerning the period of his residence. It used to be maintained that he held the see of Rome for twenty-five years. . . . The only ancient authors that can be quoted as asserting it, are Eusebius and Jerome. . . . We read in the Chronicle of Eusebius, in the year 43, that Peter, after founding the Church of Antioch, was sent to Rome, where he preached the gospel for twenty-five years, and was bishop of that city." (*a*) Such was the language of one who looks upon the fact of St. Peter's being at Rome as indisputable; for the evidence which establishes it is too plain to be avoided or rejected. The rejection would involve, as this writer insinuates, the rejection of all authentic history; as to the difficulty on which he seems to dwell, it has already been shown to be of no avail; for no Catholic writer ever pretended that St. Peter remained at Rome during the period of twenty-five years, without leaving it, although he had established

(*a*) Burton, H. E. b. ii., c. 25.

his episcopal see there. All suppose he did not remain there; and if they allow that he was the bishop for upwards of twenty-five years, notwithstanding he was absent during many years, they maintain it on precisely the same grounds as they ascribe twenty-three years of spiritual sovereignty to Pius VI., and also to Pius VII., though each of these popes was, for a considerable time, in exile in a foreign land, far away from the city whence they derived the title of Roman Pontiff.

Dollinger, in his work called The Beginnings of Christianity, explains the difficulties connected with the chronology in the following manner: "Following," he says, "the unanimous tradition of Christian antiquity, the apostle Peter was crucified at Rome, after having governed the Church there, in quality of bishop, and transmitted to his successors, with the Roman episcopate, the primacy which Christ had conferred upon him. As to the time of his arrival at Rome, and the duration of his episcopate in that city, opinions are very diverging, and it is impossible to reconcile the data of the ancients on this point otherwise than by admitting that the prince of the apostles was twice in the capital of the world.

"His first abode would fall, according to Eusebius, St. Jerome, and Orosius, in the second year of the reign of Claudius, the forty-second of the Christian era, an epoch in which St. Peter would have gone to have stopped the seductions of Simon the Magician, and would there have established the foundations of a church."

Then, being included in the edict of banishment which Claudius had promulgated against the Jews, he must quickly have left the capital of the world for Jerusalem, where he was overtaken by the persecution of Agrippa. It would seem that he afterwards undertook a more extensive apostolical journey to Asia Minor, and founded, or visited, the churches of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia, to which he addressed later his evangelical letter from Rome. St. Jerome, however, assigns this excursion into Asia Minor to a period anterior to the apostle's first visit to Rome, somewhat later than St. Peter went to Antioch, and thence to the synod of Jerusalem. Under the reign of Nero he went to Rome for the second time, where he suffered with Paul, in the year 66, the death of a martyr. It is of this journey that Lactantius speaks. Thus may be

explained the twenty-five years of episcopacy which are assigned by St. Jerome and Eusebius. There is an interval of twenty-five years from the second year of Claudius to the last year of Nero's reign. As for a continuous residence of twenty-five years' duration at Rome, that was never mentioned by any person whatever." (*a*)

One more argument in confirmation of what has already been advanced remains yet to be stated. This argument proceeds on the authority of those fathers of the Church, who uniformly assert that St. Mark was the interpreter of St. Peter, and that he wrote at Rome what he heard St. Peter say, in his addresses to the converted Jews in that city. On this point very clear evidence can be adduced. Clement of Alexandria has delivered to us the following tradition, as derived from the oldest proselytes. He says, "that the Gospel of St. Mark was occasioned in the following manner: when Peter had proclaimed the word publicly at Rome, and declared the gospel under the influence of the Spirit, as there was a great number present, they requested Mark, who had followed him from afar, and remembered well what he had said, to reduce these things to writing; and, after composing the Gospel, he gave it to those who requested it of him."(*b*)

Papias tells us that what he records, he had received from the friends of the apostles, and he makes the following statement, on the authority of John the presbyter: "Mark being the interpreter of Peter, whatsoever he recorded he wrote with great accuracy, but not, however, in the order in which it was spoken or done by our Lord; for he neither heard nor followed our Lord, but, as before said, he was in company with Peter, who gave him such instruction as was necessary." (*c*)

"Mark," says St. Jerome, "the disciple and interpreter of Peter, at the solicitation of the brethren at Rome, wrote a short gospel, according to what he had heard Peter state, which, when Peter had heard, he approved, and delivered to the Church to be read by his authority, as Clement writes in the 6th book of the Hypotyposes; and Papias, the Bishop of Hieropolis, makes mention of this Mark, as Peter does also, in his first Epistle, designate Rome figuratively,

(*a*) Vol. i., p. 70. (*b*) Eusebius, l. vi., c. 14 (*c*) Ibid., l. iii., c. 39.

by the name of Babylon. The Church which is in Babylon . . . . saluteth you, and so doth my son Mark."(*a*)

Eusebius writes as follows on this subject: "The divine word having thus been established among the Romans, the power of Simon was soon extinguished and destroyed, together with the man. So greatly, however, did the splendor of piety enlighten the mind of St. Peter's hearers, that it was not sufficient to hear but once, nor to receive the unwritten doctrine of the Gospel of God, but they persevered in every variety of entreaties to solicit Mark, as the companion of Peter, and whose Gospel we have, that he should leave them a monument of the doctrine, thus orally communicated, in writing. Nor did they cease their solicitations until they had prevailed with the man, and thus become the means of that history which is called the Gospel according to St. Mark. They say, also, that St. Peter having ascertained what was done, by the revelation of the Spirit, was delighted with the zealous ardor expressed by these men, and that the history obtained his authority, for the purpose of being read in the churches."

This account is given by Clement, in the 6th book of his Institutions, whose testimony is corroborated by that of Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis; but Peter makes mention of Mark in the first Epistle, which he is also said to have composed at the same city of Rome, and that he shows this fact by calling the city by an unusual trope, Babylon; thus, "The church at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, as doth also my son Marcus."(*a*)

The evidence already adduced respecting St. Peter's residence at Rome, is such that no unprejudiced person can any longer doubt the fact. It has been shown that Papias, Clement, Caius, Dionysius of Corinth, Ireneus, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, Eusebius, and Peter, of Alexandria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Jerome, Rufinus, Austin, Optatus of Melvis, Egysippus, Theodoret, Ambius, Orosius, Innocent, Gelasius, Philastrius of Brixia, all bear testimony to this fact, that Peter visited Rome; or, to state the argument in other words, the representatives of the illustrious churches of Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Corinth, Antioch, and Milan, of

(*a*) De Scrip. Ecc., p. 281. (*b*) Eusebius, l. ii. c. 15.

Italy, Gaul, Africa, Phrygia, Palestine, and Spain, all testify, openly and unhesitatingly, to the fact of Peter's residence in the eternal city; not one of them speaks doubtingly, not one refers to it as a mere report, not one makes use of language which could lead us to imagine that a doubt had ever been whispered in his hearing opposed to this statement; the testimony is unequivocal, nor is there a writer of antiquity who says one word in maintenance of an opposite opinion; all who refer to the see of Peter, and to the place of his death, speak of Rome as the apostolic see and the city of his martyrdom. Whilst silence on this head would not have militated against the fact, the positive testimony already adduced must be admitted as decisive of the question; add to this chain of patristic evidence the local facts which have already been mentioned, and in consequence of which Rome became, from the earliest ages, the resort of pilgrims of every grade and from every quarter of the world, and the fact can no longer be doubted, that St. Peter was at Rome, and bishop of that see for twenty-five years, and suffered martyrdom there, A. D. 66, being crucified with his head downwards. Some writers affirm that he was then eighty-six years old.

CHAPTER VII.

SUCCESSION OF THE POPES.—ST. PETER THE CHIEF OF THE APOSTLES.—MARTYRDOM OF SS. PETER AND PAUL.

THAT St. Peter was bishop of Rome has been clearly proved from the writings of Ireneus, Tertullian, Optatus, Jerome, Rufinus, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Innocent. Not only do these writers state that St. Peter was at Rome, but they likewise inform us that he founded and governed the Church in that city; Eusebius and St. Jerome affirm that he governed it during the space of twenty-five years. The see of Rome has been known in ancient as well as in modern times as the see of Peter, and has been called so under the titles "of the see of Peter, Peter's chair, the holy, the apostolic see." These are the ordinary words by which it is designated now, so also

was it wont to be called in olden times. Rome, as St. Cyprian expresses it, is the chair of Peter, and to this chair, all like St. Jerome had recourse in trouble. Though Antioch had been ruled by Peter for seven years, it was not in after ages called the see of Peter; though Jerusalem and other cities could boast of sees established by apostles and apostolic men, not one of these was called continuously the holy see, the apostolical see. These terms and those of like import, are applied to Rome, and to Rome exclusively. The fathers and other ecclesiastical writers have left us catalogues of the popes of the see of Rome. The lists of the principal sees were kept with the greatest care, and to them all members of the Church appealed when establishing their own claims, or when they wished to disprove the claims of heresy to apostolicity. Look at our records, they were wont to say; see how we can ascend from prelate to prelate until we arrive at either an apostle or one directly sent by an apostle; show your lists that prove your Church to be apostolical, and since the Roman Church was, of all others the most illustrious, the most honored, and the best known, and the Church with which all were in communion, hence it happened that to it more frequent appeals were made than to any other church. At the head of the list of its bishops the name of Peter is always distinctly placed, as appears from the catalogues which are furnished by Eusebius and by Epiphanius. "Eusebius," writes Linus, "whom he (Paul) has mentioned in his 2d Epistle to Timothy, as his companion at Rome, has been shown to have been the first after Peter who obtained the episcopate at Rome. . . . . In the second year of Titus's reign, Linus, bishop of this Church, is proved by Paul to have been a fellow-laborer and fellow-soldier with him. . . . . After Evaristus had completed the eighth year as Pope of Rome, he was succeeded in the episcopal office by Alexander, fifth in succession from Peter and Paul."(*a*) Epiphanius's list is more complete than this: "the succession of the Popes of Rome was in the following order:—Peter and Paul, Cletus, Clement, Evaristus, Alexander, Xystus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus—the same named by me above as in the list, and let no one wonder that we have gone through each of those matters,

(*a*) Eusebius, l. 3, c. 4.

for by means of these the manifest truth is pointed out."(*a*) St. Augustine writes: "How much more securely and beneficially do we reckon from Peter himself, to whom, bearing the figure of the Church, the Lord says, 'upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not overcome it.'"(*b*) St. Optatus makes use of nearly the same language as St. Augustine, and says Peter filled the pre-eminent chair, which is the first mark (of the Church); to him succeeded Linus, to Linus succeeded Clement, to Clement, Anaclete. . . . . "You who assign to yourselves the holy chair," he adds, writing to the Donatists, "tell us the origin of your chair."

St. Jerome states, in his work on ecclesiastical writers: "Clement, of whom the apostle Paul, writing to the Philippians, says, 'With Clement, and with others my fellow laborers, whose names are written in the book of life,' was the fourth bishop of Rome after St. Peter, for the second was Linus, the third Anaclete, although many Latins think that Clement was the second after the apostle Peter." (*c*)

From the ancient catalogues and pictorial representations we have another very powerful argument not only of St. Peter's being Pope of Rome, but also of his being pope there for the space of twenty-five years. The most ancient catalogue we have on record was drawn up about the year 354, during the pontificate of Liberius, from which circumstance it has been called the Liberian Catalogue. It begins with St. Peter and ends with Liberius. To St. Peter it assigns twenty-five years of episcopacy at Rome; and of all succeeding pontiffs named therein, with the exception of Liberius, the exact term of possession of the Roman see is distinctly recorded.

If it be asked why the term of Liberius's episcopacy is not given, it can be said in reply, that he was alive when that list was drawn up. This presents us with an authority anterior to the catalogue of St. Jerome, and yet agreeing completely with it.

Since the fourth century numerous catalogues have been drawn up, some of greater and some of lesser antiquity, but in all these St. Peter ever stands forth as the first pontiff of Rome, and,

(*a*) Epiphanius adv. Hev. t. i. p. 107. (*b*) St. Aug. t. viii. c. 269. (*c*) P. 285.

furthermore, the long term of twenty-five years is assigned to his episcopacy; he is the head, the leader, the founder, of the pontifical succession at Rome. Him the popes of all nations look upon as the first of the Roman line. It matters not who occupies the apostolic chair, or to what nation he belongs, the statement which he makes is this, that he is a successor of St. Peter. This fact can be only explained in one way—by acknowledging that the whole world was aware and convinced of the fact of St. Peter having been bishop of imperial Rome.

To give the catalogue in detail of the Roman pontiffs, would not seem necessary in a brief sketch like the present, as it may be found in a very interesting and learned work published a few years ago by the Benedictines of Solesmes. In this work the reader will find the antiquity of each catalogue learnedly and clearly established. There is, however, one catalogue to which it may be interesting to make some allusion.

In the famous Basilica of St. Paul, on the Ostian Way, which was destroyed by fire on the 15th of July, 1823, but which has now been rebuilt with a degree of magnificence which rivals its ancient splendor, was to be seen a pictorial list of the pontiffs, together with a record of the duration of each pontiff's government. This list was begun as early at least as the time of Leo the Great, (440,) or, as others will have it, as early as 423, and to it additions had constantly been made down to the present time. This catalogue of the popes, like the others, begins with St. Peter, and the following memorial was affixed to his likeness: "Petrus sed. ann. 25, m. 2, d. 27." Peter sat [in this see] 25 years, 2 months, and 27 days.

From all that has been said the conclusion is plain, that St. Peter was not only bishop at Rome, but that he was also bishop of Rome for a lengthened period, and also that the fact is better supported than the histories of the Cæsars, the Assueruses, the Herods, and the Etheldreds who have ruled nations. Let any one endeavor to fix the chronology of the reigns of these sovereigns, and he will soon find that the evidences which he will be able to adduce in favor of his system will not be half so respectable, or so ancient, or so abundant, as that which has been adduced in proof of St. Peter's journey to Rome, and living there as bishop of the eternal city.

The conclusion which follows from the fact of St. Peter being bishop of Rome is important, and one which every Catholic looks upon as the foundation of his faith; for if St. Peter was bishop of Rome he was also head of the entire Church, the ruler of the spiritual kingdom of God, and the shepherd of a mighty flock. To the truth of this Scripture and history alike bear evidence. To one possessed of faith it appears clear that there is hardly one truth —certainly that one truth would not be either the mystery of the Holy Trinity or the Divinity of God the Son, who became incarnate for our sakes,—more clearly referred to, and indeed expressed, in Holy Writ, than the supremacy of St. Peter.

As Bossuet well observes, "Peter appears the first in every way, the first in making profession of faith, the first in the obligation of exercising charity, the first of all the apostles who saw our Saviour risen from the dead, as he was also the first to witness before the people, the first when there was question of filling up the number of the apostles, the first to confirm the faith by a miracle, the first to convert the Jews, the first to receive the Gentiles, the first everywhere; but it is impossible to say all. Every thing concurs in establishing his primacy. Yes, every thing even his faults . . . . . The power given to several is not bestowed without restriction, whilst that given to one alone, and over all, and without exception, is communicated in full. . . . . All receive the same power, but not in the same degree, nor to the same extent. Jesus Christ begins with the first, and in this first he develops all the rest . . . . . in order to teach us that ecclesiastical authority, first established in the person of one, has only been disseminated on condition of being always recalled to its principle of unity, and that all those who shall have to exercise it ought to hold themselves inseparably united to the same chair: it is that chair so celebrated by the fathers of the Church, in exalting which they have vied with one another, attributing to it the principality of the apostolic chair, the chief principality, the source of unity, the highest degree of sacerdotal dignity, the mother church, which holds in her hand the conduct of all other churches, the head of the episcopate whence proceeds the light of government, the principal chair, the only chair, through which alone all are able to preserve unity. In these words you

hear St. Optatus, St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, St. Iræneus, St. Prosper, St. Aritus, St. Theodoret, the Council of Chalcedon, and the other councils, Africa, Gaul, Greece, Asia, the East, and the West, united together. . . . . Since it was the design of God to permit that there should arise heresies and schisms, there was no constitution that could sustain itself more firmly or more powerfully bear them down. By this constitution every thing in the Church is strong, because every thing therein is divine and united, and as each part is divine, the bond also is divine, and all together is such, that each part acts with the power of the whole." (*a*)

But for the Catholic reader there is no need to dwell on this point, for he knows that if this supremacy be destroyed, the source of unity and jurisdiction is gone, and the Church of the world is rent asunder; establish it and the world is Catholic.

Well may the fathers apply the following titles to St. Peter: "the solid rock," "the great foundation," "to him the keys of the kingdom were granted," "to him the sheep were assigned, and he is the universal shepherd," "he is the pillar of the Church, the buttress, and the principal, and the source of unity," "he is the eye of the apostles," "the mouth of the apostles," "the tongue of the apostles," "the head of the apostles," "the highest of the apostles," "the coryphæus of the choir of the apostles," "the prince of the apostles," "a leader to his own brethren," "the one chosen out of the twelve," "the one preferred before all," "the only one who has the primacy of the apostleship, and the primacy over the universal Church," "he is set over the whole habitable globe," "he is the fisherman of the universe," "he represents the whole Church," "in fine, he has received the sovereignty."

Such is the language which the fathers have applied to the prince of the apostles. Language like this cannot be equivocal; for it is the language of the eastern and western churches, respecting the supremacy of St. Peter and his being the vicar of Christ on earth.

Already has the death of St. Peter been spoken of, and the manner of it been described; something shall now be said about the

(*a*) Bossuet, Sermon sur l'Unité, part i.

death of St. Paul. "St. Peter and St. Paul were shut up in the Mamertine Prison, in the month of October, 65, and were both taken out on the 29th of June, A. D. 66; they passed through the gate Trigemina, when the lictors separated them, according to the orders which they had received. St. Peter was brought to the Vatican, where he was crucified, and St. Paul commenced his journey to the Salvian Waters, where he was beheaded. It is in the church dedicated to St. Paul, where he was martyred. In the church are three springs of water, which miraculously gushed forth from the earth where the head of the apostle touched it. In an angle is the column to which the apostle was bound when he was beheaded. Near it is the altar of the saint, ornamented with columns of black porphyry. As the apostle was lead to the place where he was martyred, he converted three of the soldiers of the escort, who were martyred three days afterward. As his head was cut off, instead of blood flowing from the body a stream of milk issued from it, which covered the ground and the lictor; the head made three bounds, and three fountains sprung up where it touched the earth, each still preserving a different temperature.

After the execution Plautilla covered the head of the apostle in her veil, and buried it in a catacomb of Lucina on the Ostian Way, and his body was, by the careful attention of Lucina, afterwards conveyed to the same spot. At the same moment the priest Marcellus was giving a royal sepulture to St. Peter, who had been crucified on the heights of the Vatican.

On the spot where the apostles separated before their execution, there is erected a small chapel, with an inscription alluding to this circumstance. Dionysius, in his Epistle to Timothy, speaks of this separation of the apostles, and also of the words they addressed to each other. Paul said to Peter: "Peace be with thee, foundation of the Church and pastor of the lambs of Christ;" and Peter said to Paul: "Go in peace, preacher of the good and guide of the salvation of the just." (*a*)

(*a*) Neligan's Rome, pp. 265-269.

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Will of God; is never detached from any event, and never interferes with man's free-will, nor lessens his guilt; how this is so, 580, 581, and the note; see *Prescience.*
Word, evangelical; importance of its ministry, see *Ministry;* is rejected by the Jews, see *Jews;* is carried to the Gentiles and received by them, see *Gentiles, Vocation, Travels.*

